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THOMAS CARLYLE

GOETHE'S HELENA.—GOETHE.—BURNS.

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GOETHE'S HELENA.

GOETHE'S tendency to complete whatsoever he began. His complete and final edition of his Works. *Helena*, a classico-romantic Phantasmagoria. Parabolic or half-parabolic character of much that Goethe has written. This style has in many cases its own appropriateness: The grand point to *have* a meaning, the best form will then gather round of its own accord. Beauty and interest of the parabolic style in Goethe's hands. To *read* an author we must be able to see his object, whatever it may be, as *he* saw it. Everywhere in life, the true question is, not what we *gain*, but what we *do*. No book that will not improve by repeated readings deserves to be read at all. Goethe's works especially require to be so read. (p. 5).—*Helena* no exception to the rule: Forms part of a continuation of *Faust*. *Faust* very little known in England, though considerably talked of. Emphatically a work of Art: A wondrous emblem of the little Life of man, encompassed and overlooked by the stupendous All. Unedifying style of English criticism: A better state of things coming. The Story of Faust a Christian mythus, in the same sense as that of Prometheus, Titan and the like, are Pagan ones. Various modern embodiments of the story: Friedrich Müller. (11).—Goethe the first who tried the subject, and the most successful. His Devil a symbol of wicked, irreverent knowledge; of specious logical Life, combined with moral Death: Faust represents the human heart, seeking and striving selfishly after 'all good.' Consequent greedy disappointment: Bitterness and danger of Isolation: Vain strugglings towards the Impossible. Conflict of moral Life with moral Death. *Faust* a deep, poetic stating of the dark questionings which had long brooded over many hearts: Wonderful skill with which this is shadowed forth. The difficulty left unsolved. (14).—The Faust and Mephistopheles of *Helena:* Change of style and of tone: Notice concerning *Faust* and *Helena* by the Author. Different methods of treating this singular love-episode: How Goethe calls back the Past, and shows it still living in the conscious Present. (21).—Helena returns to Greece after the destruction of Troy. Her misgivings as to her own fate: Her alarm aggravated by Phorcyas. Their primitive deportment, and frank, downright manner of speech. Phorcyas a feminine Mephistopheles. Her malicious sarcasm: Dialogue between Helena and Phorcyas: Helena terrified by Phorcyas into a consent to flee from impending retribution; and the Past of early Greece melts into the Present of the European middle ages. (25).—A wondrous region, neither sea nor good dry land. Helena's reception by Faust: Lynceus, the Warder of the tower. Emblematic adumbrations: Grecian Art, Teutonic Genius, School Philosophy. (38).—Faust and Helena in high favour with each other. Manners and achievements of the Middle Ages: Grecian influences. Birth of Modern Poetry; Euphorion: Inspired Poesy becomes rapt, inspired Life. Further work for Mephistopheles. (45).—Final identity of symbol and thing signified. Our Whereabout, not on the firm earth, but on the wide and airy Deep. Claims of Goethe to the reverence and faith of all who would read him wisely. (52).

GOETHE'S HELENA.[1]

[1828.]

Novalis has rather tauntingly asserted of Goethe, that the grand law of his being is to conclude whatsoever he undertakes; that, let him engage in any task, no matter what its difficulties or how small its worth, he cannot quit it till he has mastered its whole secret, finished it, and made the result of it his own. This, surely, whatever Novalis might think, is a quality of which it is far safer to have too much than too little: and if, in a friendlier spirit, we admit that it does strikingly belong to Goethe, these his present occupations will not seem out of harmony with the rest of his life; but rather it may be regarded as a singular constancy of fortune, which now allows him, after completing so many single enterprises, to adjust deliberately the details and combination of the whole; and thus, in perfecting his individual works, to put the last hand to the highest of all his works, his own literary character, and leave the impress of it to posterity in that form and accompaniment which he himself reckons fittest. For the last two years, as many of our readers may know, the venerable Poet has been employed in a patient and thorough revisal of all his Writings; an edition of which, designated as the 'complete and final' one, was commenced in 1827, under external encouragements of the most flattering sort, and with arrangements for private coöperation, which, as we learn, have secured the constant progress of the work 'against every

[1] Foreign Review, No. 2.—*Goethes Sämmtliche Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand.* (Goethe's Collective Works. Complete Edition, with his final Corrections.)—First Portion, vol. i.–v. 16mo and 8vo. Cotta; Stuttgard and Tübingen, 1827.

accident.' The first *Lieferung*, of five volumes, is now in our hands; a second of like extent, we understand to be already on its way hither; and thus by regular 'Deliveries,' from half-year to half-year, the whole Forty Volumes are to be completed in 1831.

To the lover of German literature, or of literature in general, this undertaking will not be indifferent: considering, as he must do, the works of Goethe to be among the most important which Germany for some centuries has sent forth, he will value their correctness and completeness for its own sake; and not the less, as forming the conclusion of a long process to which the last step was still wanting; whereby he may not only enjoy the result, but instruct himself by following so great a master through the changes which led to it. We can now add, that, to the mere book-collector also, the business promises to be satisfactory. This Edition, avoiding any attempt at splendour or unnecessary decoration, ranks, nevertheless, in regard to accuracy, convenience, and true simple elegance, among the best specimens of German typography. The cost too seems moderate; so that, on every account, we doubt not but these tasteful volumes will spread far and wide in their own country, and by and by, we may hope, be met with here in many a British library.

Hitherto, in this First Portion, we have found little or no alteration of what was already known; but, in return, some changes of arrangement; and, what is more important, some additions of heretofore unpublished poems; in particular, a piece entitled '*Helena, a classico-romantic Phantasmagoria,*' which occupies some eighty pages of Volume Fourth. It is to this piece that we now propose directing the attention of our readers. Such of these as have studied *Helena* for themselves, must have felt how little calculated it is, either intrinsically or by its extrinsic relations and allusions, to be rendered very interesting or even very intelligible to the English public, and may incline to augur ill of our enterprise. Indeed, to our own eyes it already looks dubious enough. But the dainty little 'Phantasmagoria,' it would appear, has become, a subject of diligent and truly wonderful speculation to our Ger-

man neighbours : of which also some vague rumours seem now to have reached this country ; and these likely enough to awaken on all hands a curiosity,[1] which, whether intelligent or idle, it were a kind of good deed to allay. In a Journal of this sort, what little light on such a matter is at our disposal may naturally be looked for.

Helena, like many of Goethe's works, by no means carries its significance written on its forehead, so that he who runs may read ; but, on the contrary, it is enveloped in a certain mystery, under coy disguises, which, to hasty readers, may be not only offensively obscure, but altogether provoking and impenetrable. Neither is this any new thing with Goethe. Often has he produced compositions, both in prose and verse, which bring critic and commentator into straits, or even to a total nonplus. Some we have wholly parabolic ; some half-literal, half-parabolic ; these latter are occasionally studied, by dull heads, in the literal sense alone ; and not only studied, but condemned : for, in truth, the outward meaning seems unsatisfactory enough, were it not that ever and anon we are reminded of a cunning, manifold meaning which lies hidden under it ; and incited by capricious beckonings to evolve this, more and more completely, from its quaint concealment.

Did we believe that Goethe adopted this mode of writing as a vulgar lure, to confer on his poems the interest which might belong to so many charades, we should hold it a very poor proceeding. Of this most readers of Goethe will know that he is incapable. Such juggleries, and uncertain anglings for distinction, are a class of accomplishments to which he has never made any pretension. The truth is, this style has, in many cases, its own appropriateness. Certainly, in all matters of Business and Science, in all expositions of fact or argument, clearness and ready comprehensibility are a great, often an indispensable, object. Nor is there any man better aware of this principle than Goethe, or who more rigorously adheres to it, or more happily exemplifies it, wherever it seems appli-

[1] See, for instance, the 'Athenæum,' No. vii., where an article stands headed with these words : FAUST, HELEN OF TROY, AND LORD BYRON.

cable. But in this, as in many other respects, Science and Poetry, having separate purposes, may have each its several law. If an artist has conceived his subject in the secret shrine of his own mind, and knows, with a knowledge beyond all power of cavil, that it is true and pure, he may choose his own manner of exhibiting it, and will generally be the fittest to choose it well. One degree of light, he may find, will beseem one delineation; quite a different degree of light another. The face of Agamemnon was not painted but hidden in the old picture: the Veiled Figure at Sais was the most expressive in the Temple. In fact, the grand point is to *have* a meaning, a genuine, deep and noble one; the proper form for embodying this, the form best suited to the subject and to the author, will gather round it almost of its own accord. We profess ourselves unfriendly to no mode of communicating Truth; which we rejoice to meet with in all shapes, from that of the child's Catechism to the deepest poetical Allegory. Nay, the Allegory itself may sometimes be the truest part of the matter. John Bunyan, we hope, is nowise our best theologian; neither, unhappily is theology our most attractive science; yet, which of our compends and treatises, nay, which of our romances and poems, lives in such mild sunshine as the good old *Pilgrim's Progress*, in the memory of so many men?

Under Goethe's management, this style of composition has often a singular charm. The reader is kept on the alert, ever conscious of his own active coöperation; light breaks on him, and clearer and clearer vision, by degrees; till at last the whole lovely Shape comes forth, definite, it may be, and bright with heavenly radiance, or fading, on this side and that, into vague expressive mystery; but true in both cases, and beautiful with nameless enchantments, as the poet's own eye may have beheld it. We love it the more for the labour it has given us: we almost feel as if we ourselves had assisted in its creation. And herein lies the highest merit of a piece, and the proper art of reading it. We have not *read* an author till we have seen his object, whatever it may be, as *he* saw it. Is it a matter of reasoning, and has he reasoned stu-

pidly and falsely? We should understand the circumstances which, to his mind, made it seem true, or persuaded him to write it, knowing that it was not so. In any other way we do him injustice if we judge him. Is it of poetry? His words are so many symbols, to which we ourselves must furnish the interpretation ; or they remain, as in all prosaic minds the words of poetry ever do, a dead letter : indications they are, barren in themselves, but, by following which, we also may reach, or approach, that Hill of Vision where the poet stood, beholding the glorious scene which it is the purport of his poem to show others. A reposing state, in which the Hill were brought under us, not we obliged to mount it, might indeed for the present be more convenient ; but, in the end, it could not be equally satisfying. Continuance of passive pleasure, it should never be forgotten, is here, as under all conditions of mortal existence, an impossibility. Everywhere in life, the true question is, not what we *gain*, but what we *do :* so also in intellectual matters, in conversation, in reading, which is more precise and careful conversation, it is not what we *receive*, but what we are made to *give*, that chiefly contents and profits us. True, the mass of readers will object ; because, like the mass of men, they are too indolent. But if any one affect, not the active and watchful, but the passive and somnolent line of study, are there not writers expressly fashioned for him, enough and to spare? It is but the smaller number of books that become more instructive by a second perusal : the great majority are as perfectly plain as perfect triteness can make them. Yet, if time is precious, no book that will not improve by repeated readings deserves to be read at all. And were there an artist of a right spirit ; a man of wisdom, conscious of his high vocation, of whom we could know beforehand that he had not written without purpose and earnest meditation, that he knew what he had written, and had embodied in it, more or less, the creations of a deep and noble soul,—should we not draw near to him reverently, as disciples to a master ; and what task could there be more profitable than to read him as we have described, to study him even to his minutest meanings? For,

were not this to think as he had thought, to see with his gifted eyes, to make the very mood and feeling of his great and rich mind the mood also of our poor and little one? It is under the consciousness of some such mutual relation that Goethe writes, and that his countrymen now reckon themselves bound to read him: a relation singular, we might say solitary, in the present time; but which it is ever necessary to bear in mind in estimating his literary procedure.

To justify it in this particular, much more might be said, were it our chief business at present. But what mainly concerns us here, is to know that such, justified or not, is the poet's manner of writing; which also must prescribe for us a correspondent manner of studying him, if we study him at all. For the rest, on this latter point he nowhere expresses any undue anxiety. His works have invariably been sent forth without preface, without note or comment of any kind; but left, sometimes plain and direct, sometimes dim and typical, in what degree of clearness or obscurity he himself may have judged best, to be scanned, and glossed, and censured, and distorted, as might please the innumerable multitude of critics; to whose verdicts he has been, for a great part of his life, accused of listening with unwarrantable composure. *Helena* is no exception to that practice, but rather among the strong instances of it. This *Interlude to Faust* presents itself abruptly, under a character not a little enigmatic; so that, at first view, we know not well what to make of it; and only after repeated perusals, will the scattered glimmerings of significance begin to coalesce into continuous light, and the whole, in any measure, rise before us with that greater or less degree of coherence which it may have had in the mind of the poet. Nay, after all, no perfect clearness may be attained, but only various approximations to it; hints and half glances of a meaning, which is still shrouded in vagueness; nay, to the just picturing of which this very vagueness was essential. For the whole piece has a dreamlike character; and in these cases, no prudent soothsayer will be altogether confident. To our readers we must now endeavour, so far as possible, to show both the dream and its interpretation: the former as it

stands written before us; the latter from our own private conjecture alone; for of those strange German comments we yet know nothing except by the faintest hearsay.

Helena forms part of a continuation to *Faust;* but, happily for our present undertaking, its connexion with the latter work is much looser than might have been expected. We say happily; because *Faust*, though considerably talked of in England, appears still to be nowise known. We have made it our duty to inspect the English Translation of *Faust*, as well as the Extracts which accompany Retzsch's Outlines; and various disquisitions and animadversions, vituperative or laudatory, grounded on these two works; but, unfortunately have found there no cause to alter the above persuasion. *Faust* is emphatically a work of Art; a work matured in the mysterious depths of a vast and wonderful mind; and bodied forth with that truth and curious felicity of composition, in which this man is generally admitted to have no living rival. To reconstruct such a work in another language; to show it in its hard yet graceful strength; with those slight witching traits of pathos or of sarcasm, those glimpses of solemnity or terror, and so many reflexes and evanescent echoes of meaning, which connect it in strange union with the whole Infinite of thought, —were business for a man of different powers than has yet attempted German translation among us. In fact, *Faust* is to be read not once but many times, if we would understand it: every line, every word has its purport; and only in such minute inspection will the essential significance of the poem display itself. Perhaps it is even chiefly by following these fainter traces and tokens that the true point of vision for the whole is discovered to us; that we get to stand at last in the proper scene of Faust; a wild and wondrous region, where, in pale light, the primeval Shapes of Chaos,—as it were, the Foundations of Being itself,—seem to loom forth, dim and huge, in the vague Immensity around us; and the life and nature of man, with its brief interests, its misery and sin, its mad passion and poor frivolity, struts and frets its hour, encompassed and overlooked by that stupendous All, of which it forms an

indissoluble though so mean a fraction. He who would study all this must for a long time, we are afraid, be content to study it in the original.

But our English criticisms of *Faust* have been of a still more unedifying sort. Let any man fancy the *Œdipus Tyrannus* discovered for the first time; translated from an unknown Greek manuscript, by some ready-writing manufacturer; and 'brought out' at Drury Lane, with new music, made as 'apothecaries make new mixtures, by pouring out of one vessel into another!' Then read the theatrical report in the Morning Papers, and the Magazines of next month. Was not the whole affair rather 'heavy?' How indifferent did the audience sit; how little use was made of the handkerchief, except by such as took snuff! Did not Œdipus somewhat remind us of a blubbering school-boy, and Jocasta of a decayed milliner? Confess that the plot was monstrous; nay, considering the marriage-law of England, highly immoral. On the whole, what a singular deficiency of *taste* must this Sophocles have laboured under! But probably he was excluded from the 'society of the influential classes;' for, after all, the man is not without indications of genius had *we* had the training of him—And so on, through all the variations of the critical cornpipe.

So might it have fared with the ancient Grecian; for so has it fared with the only modern that writes in a Grecian spirit. This treatment of *Faust* may deserve to be mentioned, for various reasons; not to be lamented over, because, as in much more important instances, it is inevitable, and lies in the nature of the case. Besides, a better state of things is evidently enough coming round. By and by, the labours, poetical and intellectual, of the Germans, as of other nations, will appear before us in their true shape; and *Faust*, among the rest, will have justice done it. For ourselves, it were unwise presumption, at any time, to pretend opening the full poetical significance of *Faust;* nor is this the place for making such an attempt. Present purposes will be answered if we can point out some general features and bearings of the piece; such as to exhibit its relations with *Helena;* by what

contrivances this latter has been intercalated into it, and how far the strange picture and the strange framing it is enclosed in correspond.

The story of Faust forms one of the most remarkable productions of the Middle Ages; or rather, it is the most striking embodiment of a highly remarkable belief, which originated or prevailed in those ages. Considered strictly, it may take the rank of a Christian mythus, in the same sense as the story of Prometheus, of Titan, and the like, are Pagan ones; and to our keener inspection, it will disclose a no less impressive or characteristic aspect of the same human nature,—here bright, joyful, self-confident, smiling even in its sternness; there deep, meditative, awestruck, austere,—in which both they and it took their rise. To us, in these days, it is not easy to estimate how this story of Faust, invested with its magic and infernal horrors, must have harrowed up the souls of a rude and earnest people, in an age when its dialect was not yet obsolete, and such contracts with the principle of Evil were thought not only credible in general, but possible to every individual auditor who here shuddered at the mention of them. The day of Magic is gone by; Witchcraft has been put a stop to by act of parliament. But the mysterious relations which it emblemed still continue; the Soul of Man still fights with the dark influences of Ignorance, Misery and Sin; still lacerates itself, like a captive bird, against the iron limits which Necessity has drawn round it; still follows False Shows, seeking peace and good on paths where no peace or good is to be found. In this sense, *Faust* may still be considered as true; nay, as a truth of the most impressive sort, and one which will always remain true. To body forth, in modern symbols, a feeling so old and deep-rooted in our whole European way of thought, were a task not unworthy of the highest poetical genius. In Germany, accordingly, it has several times been attempted, and with very various success. Klinger has produced a romance of *Faust*, full of rugged sense, and here and there not without considerable strength of delineation; yet, on the whole, of an essentially unpoetical character; dead, or living with only a mechanical life; coarse,

almost gross, and to our minds far too redolent of pitch and bitumen. Maler Müller's *Faust*, which is a Drama, must be regarded as a much more genial performance, so far as it goes: the secondary characters, the Jews and rakish Students, often remind us of our own Fords and Marlowes. His main persons, however, Faust and the Devil, are but inadequately conceived; Faust is little more than self-willed, supercilious, and alas insolvent; the Devils, above all, are savage, long-winded, and insufferably noisy. Besides, the piece has been left in a fragmentary state; it can nowise pass as the best work of Müller's.[1] Klingemann's *Faust*, which also is (or lately *was*) a Drama, we have never seen; and have only heard of it as of a tawdry and hollow article, suited for immediate use, and immediate oblivion.

Goethe, we believe, was the first who tried this subject; and is, on all hands, considered as by far the most successful.

[1] Friedrich Müller (more commonly called *Maler*, or *Painter* Müller) is here, so far as we know, named for the first time to English readers. Nevertheless, in any solid study of German literature, this author must take precedence of many hundreds whose reputation has travelled faster. But Müller has been unfortunate in his own country, as well as here. At an early age, meeting with no success as a poet, he quitted that art for painting; and retired, perhaps in disgust, into Italy; where also but little preferment seems to have awaited him. His writings, after almost half a century of neglect, were at length brought into sight and general estimation by Ludwig Tieck; at a time when the author might indeed say, that he was 'old and could not enjoy it, solitary and could not impart it,' but not, unhappily, that he was 'known and did not want it,' for his fine genius had yet made for itself no free way amid so many obstructions, and still continued unrewarded and unrecognised. His paintings, chiefly of still-life and animals, are said to possess a true though no very extraordinary merit: but of his poetry we will venture to assert that it bespeaks a genuine feeling and talent, nay rises at times even into the higher regions of Art. His *Adam's Awakening*, his *Satyr Mopsus*, his *Nusskernen* (Nutshelling), informed as they are with simple kindly strength, with clear vision, and love of nature, are incomparably the best German, or, indeed, modern Idyls; his *Genovera* will stand reading even with that of Tieck. These things are now acknowledged among the Germans; but to Müller the acknowledgment is of no avail. He died some two years ago at Rome, where he seems to have subsisted latterly as a sort of a picture-cicerone.

His manner of treating it appears to us, so far as we can understand it, peculiarly just and happy. He retains the supernatural vesture of the story, but retains it with the consciousness, on his and our part, that it is a chimera. His art-magic comes forth in doubtful twilight; vague in its outline; interwoven everywhere with light sarcasm; nowise as a real Object, but as a real shadow of an Object, which is also real, yet lies beyond our horizon, and except in its shadows, cannot itself be seen. Nothing were simpler than to look in this new poem for a new 'Satan's Invisible World displayed,' or any effort to excite the sceptical minds of these days by goblins, wizards and other infernal ware. Such enterprises belong to artists of a different species: Goethe's Devil is a cultivated personage, and acquainted with the modern sciences; sneers at witchcraft and the black-art, even while employing them, as heartily as any member of the French Institute; for he is a *philosophe*, and doubts most things, nay half disbelieves even his own existence. It is not without a cunning effort that all this is managed; but managed, in a considerable degree, it is; for a world of magic is opened to us which, we might almost say, we feel at once to be true and not true.

In fact, Mephistopheles comes before us, not arrayed in the terrors of Cocytus and Phlegethon, but in the natural indelible deformity of Wickedness; he is the Devil, not of Superstition, but of Knowledge. Here is no cloven foot, or horns and tail: he himself informs us that, during the late march of intellect, the very Devil has participated in the spirit of the age, and laid these appendages aside. Doubtless, Mephistopheles 'has the manners of a gentleman;' he 'knows the world;' nothing can exceed the easy tact with which he manages himself; his wit and sarcasm are unlimited; the cool heartfelt contempt with which he despises all things, human and divine, might make the fortune of half a dozen 'fellows about town.' Yet, withal he is a devil in very deed; a genuine Son of Night. He calls himself the Denier, and this truly is his name; for, as Voltaire did with historical doubts, so does he with all moral appearances:

settles them with a *N'en croyez rien.* The shrewd, all-informed intellect he has, is an attorney intellect: it can contradict, but it cannot affirm. With lynx vision, he descries at a glance the ridiculous, the unsuitable, the bad; but for the solemn, the noble, the worthy, he is blind as his ancient Mother. Thus does he go along, qualifying, confuting, despising; on all hands detecting the false, but without force to bring forth, or even to discern, any glimpse of the true. Poor Devil! what truth should there be for him? To see Falsehood is his only truth: falsehood and evil are the rule, truth and good the exception which confirms it. He can believe in nothing, but in his own self-conceit, and in the indestructible baseness, folly and hypocrisy of men. For him, virtue is some bubble of the blood: 'it stands written on his face that he never loved a living soul.' Nay, he cannot even hate: at Faust himself he has no grudge; he merely tempts him by way of experiment, and to pass the time scientifically. Such a combination of perfect Understanding with perfect Selfishness, of logical Life with moral Death; so universal a denier, both in heart and head,—is undoubtedly a child of Darkness, an emissary of the primeval Nothing: and coming forward, as he does, like a person of breeding, and without any flavour of brimstone, may stand here, in his merely spiritual deformity, at once potent, dangerous and contemptible, as the best and only genuine Devil of these latter times.

In strong contrast with this impersonation of modern worldly-mindedness stands Faust himself, by nature the antagonist of it, but destined also to be its victim. If Mephistopheles represent the spirit of Denial, Faust may represent that of Inquiry and Endeavour: the two are, by necessity, in conflict; the light and the darkness of man's life and mind. Intrinsically, Faust is a noble being, though no wise one. His desires are towards the high and true; nay, with a whirlwind impetuosity he rushes forth over the Universe to grasp all excellence; his heart yearns towards the infinite and the invisible: only that he knows not the conditions under which alone this is to be attained. Confiding in his feeling

of himself, he has started with the tacit persuasion, so natural to all men, that *he* at least, however it may fare with others, shall and must be *happy;* a deep-seated, though only half-conscious conviction lurks in him, that wherever he is not successful, fortune has dealt with him *unjustly*. His purposes are fair, nay generous: why should he not prosper in them? For in all his lofty aspirings, his strivings after truth and more than human greatness of mind, it has never struck him to inquire how he, the striver, was warranted for such enterprises: with what faculty Nature had equipped him; within what limits she had hemmed him in; by what right *he* pretended to be happy, or could, some short space ago, have pretended to *be* at all. Experience, indeed, will teach him, for 'Experience is the best of schoolmasters; only the school-fees are heavy.' As yet too, disappointment, which fronts him on every hand, rather maddens than instructs. Faust has spent his youth and manhood, not as others do, in the sunny crowded paths of profit, or among the rosy bowers of pleasure, but darkly and alone in the search of Truth; is it fit that Truth should now hide herself, and his sleepless pilgrimage towards Knowledge and Vision end in the pale shadow of Doubt? To his dream of a glorious higher happiness, all earthly happiness has been sacrificed; friendship, love, the social rewards of ambition were cheerfully cast aside, for his eye and his heart were bent on a region of clear and supreme good; and now, in its stead, he finds isolation, silence and despair. What solace remains? Virtue once promised to be her own reward; but because she does not pay him in the current coin of worldly enjoyment, he reckons her too a delusion; and, like Brutus, reproaches as a shadow, what he once worshipped as a substance. Whither shall he now tend? For his loadstars have gone out one by one; and as the darkness fell, the strong steady wind has changed into a fierce and aimless tornado. Faust calls himself a monster, 'without object, yet without rest.' The vehement, keen and stormful nature of the man is stung into fury, as he thinks of all he has endured and lost; he broods in gloomy meditation, and, like Bellerophon, wanders apart, 'eating his own heart;' or, bursting

into fiery paroxysms, curses man's whole existence as a mockery ; curses hope and faith, and joy and care, and what is worst, 'curses patience more than all the rest.' Had his weak arm the power, he could smite the Universe asunder, as at the crack of Doom, and hurl his own vexed being along with it into the silence of Annihilation.

Thus Faust is a man who has quitted the ways of vulgar men, without light to guide him on a better way. No longer restricted by the sympathies, the common interests and common persuasions by which the mass of mortals, each individually ignorant, nay, it may be, stolid and altogether blind as to the proper aim of life, are yet held together, and like stones in the channel of a torrent, by their very multitude and mutual collision, are made to move with some regularity,—he is still but a slave ; the slave of impulses, which are stronger, not truer or better, and the more unsafe that they are solitary. He sees the vulgar of mankind happy ; but happy only in their baseness. Himself he feels to be peculiar ; the victim of a strange, an unexampled destiny ; not as other men, he is '*with* them, not *of* them.' There is misery here, nay, as Goethe has elsewhere wisely remarked, the beginning of madness itself. It is only in the sentiment of companionship that men feel safe and assured : to all doubts and mysterious 'questionings of destiny,' their sole satisfying answer is, *Others do and suffer the like.* Were it not for this, the dullest day-drudge of Mammon might think himself into unspeakable abysses of despair ; for he too is 'fearfully and wonderfully made ;' Infinitude and Incomprehensibility surround him on this hand and that ; and the vague spectre Death, silent and sure as Time, is advancing at all moments to sweep him away forever. But he answers, *Others do and suffer the like ;* and plods along without misgivings. Were there but One Man in the world, he would be a terror to himself ; and the highest man not less so than the lowest. Now it is as this One Man that Faust regards himself : he is divided from his fellows ; cannot answer with them, *Others do the like ;* and yet, why or how he specially is to *do* or *suffer*, will nowhere reveal itself. For he is still 'in the gall of bitterness ;' Pride, and an en-

tire uncompromising though secret love of Self, are still the mainsprings of his conduct. Knowledge with him is precious only because it is power; even virtue he would love chiefly as a finer sort of sensuality, and because it was *his* virtue. A ravenous hunger for enjoyment haunts him everywhere; the stinted allotments of earthly life are as a mockery to him: to the iron law of Force he will not yield, for his heart, though torn, is yet unweakened, and till Humility shall open his eyes, the soft law of Wisdom will be hidden from him.

To invest a man of this character with supernatural powers is but enabling him to repeat his error on a larger scale, to play the same false game with a deeper and more ruinous stake. Go where he may, he will 'find himself again in a conditional world;' widen his sphere as he pleases, he will find it again encircled by the empire of Necessity; the gay island of Existence is again but a fraction of the ancient realm of Night. Were he all-wise and all-powerful, perhaps he might be contented and virtuous; scarcely otherwise. The poorest human soul is infinite in wishes, and the infinite Universe was not made for one, but for all. Vain were it for Faust, by heaping height on height, to struggle towards infinitude; while to that law of Self-denial, by which alone man's narrow destiny may become an infinitude within itself, he is still a stranger. Such, however, is his attempt: not indeed incited by hope, but goaded on by despair, he unites himself with the Fiend, as with a stronger though a wicked agency; reckless of all issues, if so were that, by these means, the craving of his heart might be stayed, and the dark secret of Destiny unravelled or forgotten.

It is this conflicting union of the higher nature of the soul with the lower elements of human life; of Faust, the son of Light and Free will, with the influences of Doubt, Denial and Obstruction, or Mephistopheles, who is the symbol and spokesman of these, that the poet has here proposed to delineate. A high problem; and of which the solution is yet far from completed; nay perhaps, in a poetical sense, is not, strictly speaking, capable of completion. For it is to be remarked that, in this contract with the Prince of Darkness, little or no

mention or allusion is made to a Future Life; whereby it might seem as if the action was not intended, in the manner of the old Legend, to terminate in Faust's perdition; but rather as if an altogether different end must be provided for him. Faust, indeed, wild and wilful as he is, cannot be regarded as a wicked, much less as an utterly reprobate man: we do not reckon him ill-intentioned, but misguided and miserable; he falls into crime, not by purpose, but by accident and blindness. To send him to the Pit of Woe, to render such a character the eternal slave of Mephistopheles, would look like making darkness triumphant over light, blind force over erring reason; or at best, were cutting the Gordian knot, not loosing it. If we mistake not, Goethe's *Faust* will have a finer moral than the old nursery-tale, or the other plays and tales that have been founded on it. Our seared and blighted, yet still noble Faust, will not end in the madness of horror, but in Peace grounded on better Knowledge. Whence that knowledge is to come, what higher and freer world of Art or Religion may be hovering in the mind of the Poet, we will not try to surmise; perhaps in bright aërial emblematic glimpses, he may yet show it us, transient and afar off, yet clear with orient beauty, as a Land of Wonders, and new Poetic Heaven.

With regard to that part of the Work already finished, we must here say little more. *Faust*, as it yet stands, is, indeed, only a stating of the difficulty; but a stating of it wisely, truly and with deepest poetic emphasis. For how many living hearts, even now imprisoned in the perplexities of Doubt, do these wild piercing tones of Faust, his withering agonies and fiery desperation, 'speak the word they have long been waiting to hear!' A nameless pain had long brooded over the soul: here, by some light touch, it starts into form and voice; we see it and know it, and see that another also knew it. This *Faust* is as a mystic Oracle for the mind; a Dodona grove, where the oaks and fountains prophesy to us of our destiny, and murmur unearthly secrets.

How all this is managed, and the Poem so curiously fashioned; how the clearest insight is combined with the keenest

feeling, and the boldest and wildest imagination; by what soft and skilful finishing these so heterogeneous elements are blended in fine harmony, and the dark world of spirits, with its merely metaphysical entities, plays like a chequering of strange mysterious shadows among the palpable objects of material life; and the whole, firm in its details, and sharp and solid as reality, yet hangs before us melting on all sides into air, and free and light as the baseless fabric of a vision; all this the reader can learn fully nowhere but, by long study, in the Work itself. The general scope and spirit of it we have now endeavoured to sketch: the few incidents on which, with the aid of much dialogue and exposition, these have been brought out, are perhaps already known to most readers, and, at all events, need not be minutely recapitulated here. Mephistopheles has promised to himself that he will lead Faust 'through the bustling inanity of life,' but that its pleasures shall tempt and not satisfy him; 'food shall hover before his eager lips, but he shall beg for nourishment in vain.' Hitherto they have travelled but a short way together; yet so far, the Denier has kept his engagement well. Faust, endowed with all earthly and many more than earthly advantages, is still no nearer contentment; nay, after a brief season of marred and uncertain joy, he finds himself sunk into deeper wretchedness than ever. Margaret, an innocent girl whom he loves, but has betrayed, is doomed to die, and already crazed in brain, less for her own errors than for his: in a scene of true pathos, he would fain persuade her to escape with him, by the aid of Mephistopheles, from prison; but in the instinct of her heart she finds an invincible aversion to the Fiend: she chooses death and ignominy, rather than life and love, if of his giving. At her final refusal, Mephistopheles proclaims that "she is judged," a 'voice from Above' that "she is saved;" the action terminates; Faust and Mephistopheles vanish from our sight, as into boundless Space.

And now, after so long a preface, we arrive at *Helena*, the 'Classico-romantic Phantasmagoria,' where these Adventurers, strangely altered by travel, and in altogether different cos-

tume, have again risen into sight. Our long preface was not needless; for *Faust* and *Helena*, though separated by some wide and marvellous interval, are nowise disconnected. The characters may have changed by absence; Faust is no longer the same bitter and tempestuous man, but appears in chivalrous composure, with a silent energy, a grave and, as it were, commanding ardour. Mephistopheles alone may retain somewhat of his old spiteful shrewdness: but still the past state of these personages must illustrate the present; and only by what we remember of them, can we try to interpret what we see. In fact, the style of *Helena* is altogether new; quiet, simple, joyful; passing by a short gradation from Classic dignity into Romantic pomp; it has everywhere a full and sunny tone of colouring; resembles not a tragedy, but a gay gorgeous mask. Neither is Faust's former history alluded to, or any explanation given us of occurrences that may have intervened. It is a light scene, divided by chasms and unknown distance from that other country of gloom. Nevertheless, the latter still frowns in the background; nay, rises aloft, shutting out farther view, and our gay vision attains a new significance, as it is painted on that canvas of storm.

We question whether it ever occurred to any English reader of *Faust*, that the work needed a continuation, or even admitted one. To the Germans, however, in their deeper study of a favourite poem, which also they have full means of studying, this has long been no secret; and such as have seen with what zeal most German readers cherish *Faust*, and how the younger of them will recite whole scenes of it, with a vehemence resembling that of Gil Blas and his *Figures Hibernoises*, in the streets of Oviedo, may estimate the interest excited in that country by the following Notice from the Author, published last year in his *Kunst und Alterthum*.

'*Helena. Interlude in Faust.*

'Faust's character, in the elevation to which latter refinement, working on the old rude Tradition, has raised it, represents a man who, feeling impatient and imprisoned within the limits of mere earthly existence, regards the possession of the highest knowledge, the enjoyment of the fairest blessings, as

insufficient even in the slightest degree to satisfy his longing: a spirit, accordingly, which struggling out on all sides, ever returns the more unhappy.

'This form of mind is so accordant with our modern disposition, that various persons of ability have been induced to undertake the treatment of such a subject. My manner of attempting it obtained approval: distinguished men considered the matter, and commented on my performance; all which I thankfully observed. At the same time I could not but wonder that none of those who undertook a continuation and completion of my Fragment, had lighted on the thought, which seemed so obvious, that the composition of a Second Part must necessarily elevate itself altogether away from the hampered sphere of the First, and conduct a man of such a nature into higher regions, under worthier circumstances.

'How I, for my part, had determined to essay this, lay silently before my own mind, from time to time exciting me to some progress; while, from all and each, I carefully guarded my secret, still in hope of bringing the work to the wished-for issue. Now, however, I must no longer keep back; or, in publishing my collective Endeavours, conceal any farther secret from the world; to which, on the contrary, I feel myself bound to submit my whole labours, even though in a fragmentary state.

'Accordingly I have resolved that the above-named Piece, a smaller drama, complete within itself, but pertaining to the Second Part of *Faust*, shall be forthwith presented in the First Portion of my Works.

'The wide chasm between that well-known dolorous conclusion of the First Part, and the entrance of an antique Grecian Heroine, is not yet overarched; meanwhile as a preamble, my readers will accept what follows:

'The old Legend tells us, and the Puppet-play fails not to introduce the scene, that Faust, in his imperious pride of heart, required from Mephistopheles the love of the fair Helena of Greece; in which demand the other, after some reluctance, gratified him. Not to overlook so important a concern in our work, was a duty for us: and how we have endeavoured to discharge it, will be seen in this Interlude. But what may have furnished the proximate occasion of such an occurrence, and how, after manifold hindrances, our old magical Craftsman can have found means to bring back the individual Helena, in person, out of Orcus into Life, must, in this stage of the business, remain undiscovered. For the present, it is

enough if our reader will admit that the real Helena may step forth, on antique tragedy-cothurnus, before her primitive abode in Sparta. We then request him to observe in what way and manner Faust will presume to court favour from this royal all-famous Beauty of the world.'

To manage so unexampled a courtship will be admitted to be no easy task; for the mad hero's prayer must here be fulfilled to its largest extent, before the business can proceed a step; and the gods, it is certain, are not in the habit of annihilating time and space, even to make 'two lovers happy.' Our Marlowe was not ignorant of this mysterious *liaison* of Faust's: however, he slurs it over briefly, and without fronting the difficulty: Helena merely flits across the scene, as an airy pageant, without speech or personality, and makes the lovesick philosopher 'immortal by a kiss.' Probably there are not many that would grudge Faust such immortality; we at least nowise envy him: for who does not see that this, in all human probability, is no real Helena, but only some hollow phantasm attired in her shape; while the true Daughter of Leda still dwells afar off in the inane kingdoms of Dis, and heeds not and hears not the most potent invocations of black-art? Another matter it is to call forth the frail fair one in very deed; not in form only, but in soul and life, the *same* Helena whom the Son of Atreus wedded, and for whose sake Ilion ceased to be. For Faust must behold this Wonder, not as she seemed, but as she was; and at his unearthly desire, the Past shall become Present; and the antique Time must be new-created, and give back its persons and circumstances, though so long since reingulfed in the silence of the blank bygone Eternity! However, Mephistopheles is a cunning genius; and will not start at common obstacles. Perhaps, indeed, he is Metaphysician enough to know that Time and Space are but quiddities, not entities; *forms* of the human soul, Laws of Thought, which to us appear independent existences, but, out of our brain, have no existence whatever, in which case the whole nodus may be more of a logical cobweb, than any actual material perplexity. Let us see how he unravels it, or cuts it.

The scene is Greece; not our poor oppressed Ottoman Morea, but the old heroic Hellas; for the sun again shines on Sparta and 'Tyndarus' high House' stands here bright, massive and entire, among its mountains, as when Menelaus revisited it, wearied with his ten years of warfare, and eight of sea-roving. Helena appears in front of the Palace, with a Chorus of captive Trojan maidens. These are but Shades, we know, summoned from the deep realms of Hades, and embodied for the nonce: but the Conjurer has so managed it, that they themselves have no consciousness of this their true and highly precarious state of existence: the intermediate three thousand years have been obliterated, or compressed into a point; and these fair figures, on revisiting the upper air, entertain not the slightest suspicion that they had ever left it, or, indeed, that anything special had happened; save only that they had just disembarked from the Spartan ships, and been sent forward by Menelaus to provide for his reception, which is shortly to follow. All these indispensable preliminaries, it would appear, Mephistopheles has arranged with considerable success. Of the poor Shades, and their entire ignorance, he is so sure that he would not scruple to cross-question them on this very point, so ticklish for his whole enterprise; nay, cannot forbear, now and then, throwing out malicious hints to mystify Helena herself and raise the strangest doubts as to her personal identity. Thus on one occasion, as we shall see, he reminds her of a scandal which had gone abroad of her being a *double* personage, of her living with King Proteus in Egypt at the very time when she lived with Beau Paris in Troy; and, what is more extraordinary still, of her having been dead, and married to Achilles afterwards in the Island of Leuce. Helena admits that it is the most inexplicable thing on earth; can only conjecture that 'she a Vision was joined to him a Vision;' and then sinks into a reverie or swoon, in the arms of the Chorus. In this way can the nether-world Scapin sport with the perplexed Beauty; and by sly practice make her show us the secret, which is unknown to herself!

For the present, however, there is no thought of such scru-

ples. Helena and her maidens, far from doubting that they are real authentic denizens of this world, feel themselves in a deep embarrassment about its concerns. From the dialogue, in long Alexandrines, or choral Recitative, we soon gather that matters wear a threatening aspect. Helena salutes her paternal and nuptial mansion in such style as may beseem an erring wife, returned from so eventful an elopement; alludes with charitable lenience to her frailty; which, indeed, it would seem, was nothing but the merest accident, for she had simply gone to pay her vows, 'according to sacred wont,' in the temple of Cytherea, when the 'Phrygian robber' seized her; and further informs us that the Immortals still foreshow to her a dubious future:

> For seldom, in our swift ship, did my husband deign
> To look on me; and word of comfort spake he none.
> As if a-brooding mischief, there he silent sat;
> Until, when steered into Eurotas' bending bay,
> The first ships with their prows but kissed the land,
> He rose, and said, as by the voice of gods inspired:
> Here will I that my warriors, troop by troop, disbark;
> I muster them, in battle-order, on the ocean-strand.
> But thou, go forward, up Eurotas' sacred bank,
> Guiding the steeds along the flower-besprinkled space,
> Till thou arrive on the fair plain where Lacedæmon,
> Erewhile a broad fruit-bearing field, has piled its roofs
> Amid the mountains, and sends up the smoke of hearths.
> Then enter thou the high-towered Palace; call the Maids
> I left at parting, and the wise old Stewardess:
> With her inspect the Treasures which thy father left,
> And I, in war or peace still adding, have heaped up.
> Thou findest all in order standing; for it is
> The prince's privilege to see, at his return,
> Each household item as it was, and where it was;
> For of himself the slave hath power to alter naught.

It appears, moreover, that Menelaus has given her directions to prepare for a solemn Sacrifice: the ewers, the pateras, the altar, the axe, dry wood, are all to be in readiness; only of the victim there was no mention; a circumstance from which Helena fails not to draw some rather alarming surmises.

However, reflecting that all issues rest with the higher Powers, and that, in any case, irresolution and procrastination will avail her nothing, she at length determines on this grand enterprise of entering the palace, to make a general review; and enters accordingly. But long before any such business could have been finished, she hastily returns, with a frustrated, nay terrified aspect; much to the astonishment of her Chorus, who pressingly inquire the cause.

HELENA (*who has left the door-leaves open, agitated*).

Beseems not that Jove's daughter shrink with common fright,
Nor by the brief cold touch of Fear be chilled and stunned.
Yet the Horror, which ascending, in the womb of Night,
From deeps of Chaos, rolls itself together many-shaped,
Like glowing Clouds, from out the mountain's fire-throat,
In threatening ghastliness, may shake even heroes' hearts.
So have the Stygian here to-day appointed me
A welcome to my native Mansion, such that fain
From the oft-trod, long-wished-for threshold, like a guest
That has took leave, I would withdraw my steps, for aye.
But no! Retreated have I to the light, nor shall
Ye farther force me, angry Powers, be who ye may.
New expiations will I use; then purified,
The blaze of the Hearth may greet the Mistress as the Lord.

PANTHALIS THE CHORAGE.[1]

Discover, noble queen, to us thy handmaidens,
That wait by thee in love, what misery has befallen.

HELENA.

What I have seen, ye too with your own eyes shall see,
If Night have not already sucked her Phantoms back
To the abysses of her wonder-bearing breast.
Yet, would ye know this thing, I tell it you in words.
When bent on present duty, yet with anxious thought,
I solemnly set foot in these high royal Halls,
The silent, vacant passages astounded me;
For tread of hasty footsteps nowhere met the ear,
Nor bustle as of busy menial-work the eye.
No maid comes forth to me, no Stewardess, such as
Still wont with friendly welcome to salute all guests.
But as, alone advancing, I approach the Hearth,

[1] Leader of the Chorus.

There, by the ashy remnant of dim outburnt coals,
Sits, crouching on the ground, up-muffled, some huge Crone.
Not as in sleep she sat, but as in drowsy muse.
With ordering voice I bid her rise ; naught doubting 'twas
The Stewardess the King, at parting hence, had left.
But, heedless, shrunk together, sits she motionless ;
And as I chid, at last outstretched her lean right arm,
As if she beckoned me from hall and hearth away.
I turn indignant from her, and hasten out forthwith
Towards the steps whereon aloft the Thalamos
Adorned rises ; and near by it the Treasure-room ;
When lo ! the Wonder starts abruptly from the floor ;
Imperious, barring my advance, displays herself
In haggard stature, hollow bloodshot eyes ; a shape
Of hideous strangeness, to perplex all sight and thought.
But I discourse to the air : for words in vain attempt
To body forth to sight the form that dwells in us.
There see herself ! She ventures forward to the light !
Here we are masters till our Lord and King shall come.
The ghastly births of Night, Apollo, beauty's friend,
Disperses back to their abysses, or subdues.

PHORCYAS *enters on the threshold, between the door-posts.*

CHORUS.

Much I have seen, and strange, though the ringlets
Youthful and thick still wave round my temples :
Terrors a many, war and its horrors
Witnessed I once in Ilion's night,
When it fell.
Thorough the clanging, cloud-covered din of
Onrushing warriors, heard I th' Immortals
Shouting in anger, heard I Bellona's
Iron-toned voice resound from without
City-wards.

Ah ! the City yet stood, with its
Bulwarks ; Ilion safely yet
Towered : but spreading from house over
House, the flame did begirdle us ;
Sea-like, red, loud and billowy ;
Hither, thither, as tempest-floods,
Over the death-circled City.

Flying, saw I, through heat and through
Gloom and glare of that fire-ocean,
Shapes of Gods in their wrathfulness,
Stalking grim, fierce, and terrible,
Giant-high, through the luridly
Flame-dyed dusk of that vapour.

Did I see it, or was it but
Terror of heart that fashioned
Forms so affrighting? Know can I
Never: but here that I view this
Horrible Thing with my own eyes,
This of a surety believe I:
Yea, I could clutch 't in my fingers,
Did not, from Shape so dangerous,
Fear at a distance keep me.

Which of old Phorcys'
Daughters then art thou?
For I compare thee to
That generation.
Art thou belike of the Graiæ,
Gray-born, one eye and one tooth
Using alternate,
Child or descendant?

Darest thou, Haggard,
Close by such beauty,
'Fore the divine glance of
Phœbus, display thee?
But display it as it pleases thee;
For the ugly he heedeth not,
As his bright eye yet never did
Look on a shadow.

But us mortals, alas for it!
Law of Destiny burdens us
With the unspeakable eye-sorrow
Which such a sight, unblessed, detestable,
Doth in lovers of beauty awaken.

Nay then, hear, since thou shamelessly
Com'st forth fronting us, hear only
Curses, hear all manner of threatenings,
Out of the scornful lips of the happier
That were made by the Deities.

PHORCYAS.

Old is the saw, but high and true remains its sense,
That Shame and Beauty ne'er, together hand in hand,
Were seen pursue their journey over the earth's green path.
Deep-rooted dwells an ancient hatred in these two;
So that wherever, on their way, one haps to meet
The other, each on its adversary turns its back;
Then hastens forth the faster on its separate road;
Shame all in sorrow, Beauty pert and light of mood;
Till the hollow night of Orcus catches it at length,
If age and wrinkles have not tamed it long before.
So you, ye wantons, wafted hither from strange lands,
I find in tumult, like the cranes' hoarse jingling flight,
That over our heads, in long-drawn cloud, sends down
Its creaking gabble, and tempts the silent wanderer that he look
Aloft at them a moment: but they go their way,
And he goes his; so also will it be with us.

Who then are ye, that here, in Bacchanalian wise,
Like drunk ones, ye dare uproar at this Palace-gate?
Who then are ye, that at the Stewardess of the King's House
Ye howl, as at the moon the crabbed brood of dogs?
Think ye 'tis hid from me what manner of thing ye are?
Ye war-begotten, fight-bred, feather-headed crew!
Lascivious crew, seducing as seduced, that waste,
In rioting, alike the soldier's and the burgher's strength!
Here seeing you gathered, seems as a cicada-swarm
Had lighted, covering the herbage of the fields.
Consumers ye of other's thrift, ye greedy-mouthed
Quick squanderer of fruits men gain by tedious toil;
Cracked market-ware, stol'n, bought, and bartered troop of slaves!

We have thought it right to give so much of these singular expositions and altercations, in the words, as far as might be, of the parties themselves; happy, could we, in any measure, have transfused the broad, yet rich and chaste simplicity of these long iambics; or imitated the tone, as we have done the metre, of that choral song; its rude earnestness, and tortuous, awkward-looking, artless strength, as we have done its dactyls and anapæsts. The task was no easy one; and we remain, as might have been expected, little contented with our efforts; having, indeed, nothing to boast of, except a

sincere fidelity to the original. If the reader through such distortion, can obtain any glimpse of *Helena* itself, he will not only pardon us, but thank us. To our own minds, at least, there is everywhere a strange, piquant, quite peculiar charm in these imitations of the old Grecian style: a dash of the ridiculous, if we might say so, is blended with the sublime, yet blended with it softly, and only to temper its austerity; for often, so graphic is the delineation, we could almost feel as if a vista were open through the long gloomy distance of ages, and we, with our modern eyes and modern levity, beheld afar off, in clear light, the very figures of that old grave time; saw them again living in their old antiquarian costume and environment, and heard them audibly discourse in a dialect which had long been dead. Of all this no man is more master than Goethe: as a modern-antique, his *Iphigenie* must be considered unrivalled in poetry. A similar, thoroughly classical spirit will be found in this First Part of *Helena;* yet the manner of the two pieces is essentially different. Here, we should say, we are more reminded of Sophocles, perhaps of Æschylus, than of Euripides: it is more rugged, copious, energetic, inartificial; a still more ancient style. How very primitive, for instance, are Helena and Phorcyas in their whole deportment here! How frank and downright in speech; above all, how minute and specific; no glimpse of 'philosophical culture;' no such thing as a 'general idea;' thus, every different object seems a new unknown one, and requires to be separately stated. In like manner, what can be more honest and edifying than the chaunt of the Chorus? With what inimitable *naïveté* they recur to the sack of Troy, and endeavour to convince themselves that they do actually see this 'horrible Thing;' then lament the law of Destiny which dooms them to such 'unspeakable eye-sorrow;' and, finally, break forth into sheer cursing; to all which Phorcyas answers in the like free and plain-spoken fashion.

But to our story. This hard-tempered and so dreadfully ugly old lady, the reader cannot help suspecting, at first sight, to be some cousin-german of Mephistopheles, or, in-

deed, that great Actor of all Work himself; which latter suspicion the devilish nature of the beldame, by degrees, confirms into a moral certainty. There is a sarcastic malice in the 'wise old Stewardess' which cannot be mistaken. Meanwhile the Chorus and the beldame indulge still farther in mutual abuse; she upbraiding them with their giddiness and wanton disposition; they chaunting unabatedly her extreme deficiency in personal charms. Helena, however, interposes; and the old Gorgon, pretending that she has not till now recognised the stranger to be her Mistress, smooths herself into gentleness, affects the greatest humility, and even appeals to her for protection against the insolence of these young ones. But wicked Phorcyas is only waiting her opportunity; still neither unwilling to wound, nor afraid to strike. Helena, to expel some unpleasant vapours of doubt, is reviewing her past history, in concert with Phorcyas; and observes, that the latter had been appointed Stewardess by Menelaus, on his return from his Cretan expedition to Sparta. No sooner is Sparta mentioned, than the crone, with an officious air of helping-out the story, adds:

Which thou forsookest, Ilion's tower-encircled town
Preferring, and the unexhausted joys of Love.

HELENA.

Remind me not of joys; an all-too heavy woe's
Infinitude soon followed, crushing breast and heart.

PHORCYAS.

But I have heard thou livest on earth a double life;
In Ilion seen, and seen the while in Egypt too.

HELENA.

Confound not so the weakness of my weary sense
Here even, who or what I am, I know it not.

PHORCYAS.

Then I have heard how, from the hollow Realm of Shades
Achilles too did fervently unite himself to thee;
Thy earlier love reclaiming, spite of all Fate's laws.

HELENA.

To him the Vision, I a Vision joined myself:
It was a dream, the very words may teach us this.
But I am faint; and to myself a Vision grow.
[Sinks into the arms of one division of the Chorus.

CHORUS.

Silence! silence!
Evil-eyed, evil-tongued, thou!
Through so shrivelled-up, one-tooth'd a
Mouth, what good can come from that
Throat of horrors detestable—

—In which style they continue musically rating her, till 'Helena has recovered, and again stands in the middle of the chorus;' when Phorcyas, with the most wheedling air, hastens to greet her, in a new sort of verse, as if nothing whatever had happened:

PHORCYAS.

Issues forth from passing cloud the sun of this bright day:
If when veil'd she so could charm us, now her beams in splendour blind.
As the world doth look before thee, in such gentle wise thou look'st.
Let them call me so unlovely, what is lovely know I well.

HELENA.

Come so wavering from the Void which in that faintness circled me,
Glad I were to rest again, a space; so weary are my limbs.
Yet it well becometh queens, all mortals it becometh well,
To possess their hearts in patience, and await what can betide.

PHORCYAS.

Whilst thou standest in thy greatness, in thy beauty here,
Says thy look that thou commandest: what command'st thou? Speak it out.

HELENA.

To conclude your quarrel's idle loitering be prepared:
Haste, arrange the Sacrifice the King commanded me.

PHORCYAS.

All is ready in the Palace, bowl and tripod, sharp-ground axe;
For besprinkling, for befuming; now the Victim let us see.

HELENA.

This the King appointed not.

PHORCYAS.

Spoke not of this? O word of woe!

HELENA.

What strange sorrow overpowers thee?

PHORCYAS.

Queen, 'tis thou he meant.

HELENA.

I?

PHORCYAS.

And these.

CHORUS.

O woe! O woe!

PHORCYAS.

Thou fallest by the axe's stroke.

HELENA.

Horrible, yet look'd for: hapless I!

PHORCYAS.

Inevitable seems it me.

CHORUS.

Ah, and us? What will become of us?

PHORCYAS.

She dies a noble death:
Ye, on the high Beam within that bears the rafters and the roof,
As in birding-time so many woodlarks, in a row, shall sprawl.

[HELENA *and* CHORUS *stand astounded and terrorstruck; in expressive, well-concerted grouping.*

Poor spectres!—All like frozen statues there ye stand,
In fright to leave the Day which not belongs to you.
No man or spectre, more than you, is fond to quit
The Upper Light; yet rescue, respite finds not one:
All know it, all believe it, few delight in it.
Enough, 'tis over with you! And so let's to work.

How the cursed old beldame enjoys the agony of these poor Shades; nay, we suspect, she is laughing in her sleeve at the very Classicism of this Drama, which she herself has contrived, and is even now helping to enact! Observe she has

quitted her octameter trochaics again, and taken to plain blank verse ; a sign, perhaps, that she is getting weary of the whole Classical concern ! But however this may be she now claps her hands ; whereupon certain distorted dwarf figures appear at the door, and, with great speed and agility, at her order, bring forth the sacrificial apparatus ; on which she fails not to descant demonstratively, explaining the purpose of the several articles as they are successively fitted up before her. Here is the 'gold-horned altar,' the 'axe glittering over its silver edge ;' then there must be 'water-urns to wash the black blood's defilement,' and a 'precious mat' to kneel on, for the victim is to be beheaded queenlike. On all hands, mortal horror ! But Phorcyas hints darkly that there is still a way of escape left ; this, of course, every one is in deepest eagerness to learn. Here, one would think, she might for once come to the point without digression : but Phorcyas has her own way of stating a fact. She thus commences :

PHORCYAS.

Whoso, collecting store of wealth, at home abides
To parget in due season his high dwelling's walls,
And prudent guard his roof from inroad of the rain,
With him, through long still years of life, it shall be well.
But he who lightly, in his folly, bent to rove,
O'ersteps with wand'ring foot his threshold's sacred line,
Will find, at his return, the ancient place, indeed,
Still there, but else all alter'd, if not overthrown.

HELENA.

Why these trite saws ? Thou wert to teach us, not reprove.

PHORCYAS.

Historical it is, is nowise a reproof.
Sea-roving, steer'd King Menelaus brisk from bay to bay ;
Descended on all ports and isles, a plundering foe,
And still came back with booty, which yet moulders here.
Then by the walls of Ilion spent he ten long years ;
How many in his homeward voyage were hard to know.
But all this while how stands it here with Tyndarus'
High house ? How stands it with his own domains around ?

HELENA.

Is love of railing, then, so interwoven with thee,
That thus, except to chide, thou canst not move thy lips ?

PHORCYAS.

So many years forsaken stood the mountain glen,
Which, north from Sparta, towards the higher land ascends
Behind Taygetus ; where, as yet a merry brook,
Eurotas gurgles on, and then, along our Vale,
In sep'rate streams abroad outflowing feeds your Swans.
There, backwards in the rocky hills, a daring race
Have fix'd themselves, forth issuing from Cimmerian Night ;
An inexpugnable stronghold have piled aloft,
From which they harry land and people as they please.

HELENA.

How could they ? All impossible it seems to me.

PHORCYAS.

Enough of time they had : 'tis haply twenty years.

HELENA.

Is One the Master ? Are there Robbers many ; leagued ?

PHORCYAS.

Not Robbers these : yet many, and the Master One.
Of him I say no ill, though hither too he came.
What might not he have took ? yet did content himself
With some small Present, so he called it, Tribute, not.

HELENA.

How looks he ?

PHORCYAS.

Nowise ill ! To me he pleasant look'd.
A jocund, gallant, hardy, handsome man it is,
And rational in speech, as of the Greeks are few.
We call the folk Barbarian ; yet I question much
If one there be so cruel, as at Ilion
Full many of our best heroes man-devouring were.
I do respect his greatness, and confide in him.
And for his Tower ! this with your own eyes ye should see :
Another thing it is than clumsy boulder-work,
Such as our Fathers, nothing scrupling, huddled up,
Cyclopean, and like Cyclops-builders, one rude crag

On other rude crags tumbling: in that Tow'r of theirs
'Tis plumb and level all, and done by square and rule.
Look on it from without! Heav'nward it soars on high,
So strait, so tight of joint, and mirror-smooth as steel:
To clamber there—Nay, even your very Thought slides down;
And then, within, such courts, broad spaces, all around,
With masonry encompass'd of every sort and use:
There have ye arches, archlets, pillars, pillarlets,
Balconies, galleries, for looking out and in,
And coats of arms.

CHORUS.

Of arms? What mean'st thou?

PHORCYAS.

Ajax bore
A twisted Snake on his Shield, as ye yourselves have seen.
The Seven also before Thebes bore carved work
Each on his Shield; devices rich and full of sense:
There saw ye moon and stars of the nightly heaven's vault,
And goddesses, and heroes, ladders, torches, swords,
And dangerous tools, such as in storm o'erfall good towns.
Escutcheons of like sort our heroes also bear:
There see ye lions, eagles, claws besides, and bills,
Then buffalo-horns, and wings, and roses, peacock-tails;
And bandelets, gold and black and silver, blue and red.
Such like are there hung up in Halls, row after row;
In halls, so large, so lofty, boundless as the World;
There might ye dance!

CHORUS.

Ha! Tell us, are there dancers there?

PHORCYAS.

The best on earth! A golden-hair'd, fresh, younker band,
They breathe of youth; Paris alone so breath'd when to
Our Queen he came too near.

HELENA.

Thou quite dost lose
The tenor of thy story: say me thy last word.

PHORCYAS.

Thyself wilt say it: say it earnestly, audibly, Yes!
Next moment, I surround thee with that Tow'r.

The step is questionable: for is not this Phorcyas a person of the most suspicious character; or rather, is it not certain

that she is a Turk in grain, and will, almost of a surety, go how it may, turn good into bad? And yet, what is to be done? A trumpet, said to be that of Menelaus, sounds in the distance; at which the Chorus shrink together in increased terror. Phorcyas coldly reminds them of Deiphobus, with his slit nose, as a small token of Menelaus' turn of thinking on these matters; supposes, however, that there is now nothing for it but to wait the issue, and die with propriety. Helena has no wish to die, either with propriety or impropriety; she pronounces, though with a faltering resolve, the definitive Yes. A burst of joy breaks from the Chorus; thick fog rises all round; in the midst of which, as we learn from their wild tremulous chaunt, they feel themselves hurried through the air: Eurotas is swept from sight, and the cry of its Swans fades ominously away in the distance; for now, as we suppose, 'Tyndarus' high House,' with all its appendages, is rushing back into the depths of the Past; old *Lacedæmon* has again become new *Misetra;* only Taygetus, with another name, remains unchanged: and the King of Rivers feeds among his sedges quite a different race of Swans than those of Leda! The mist is passing away, but yet, to the horror of the Chorus, no clear daylight returns. Dim masses rise round them: Phorcyas has vanished. Is it a castle? Is it a cavern? They find themselves in the 'Interior Court of the Tower, sur-'rounded with rich fantastic buildings of the middle ages!'

If, hitherto, we have moved along, with considerable convenience, over ground singular enough indeed, yet, the nature of it once understood, affording firm footing and no unpleasant scenery, we come now to a strange mixed element, in which it seems as if neither walking, swimming, nor even flying, could rightly avail us. We have cheerfully admitted, and honestly believed, that Helena and her Chorus were Shades; but now they appear to be changing into mere Ideas, mere Metaphors, or poetic Thoughts! Faust too, for *he*, as every one sees, must be lord of this Fortress, is a much-altered man since we last met him. Nay, sometimes we could fancy he were only *acting a part* on this occasion; were a mere mum-

mer, representing not so much his own natural *personality*, as some shadow and impersonation of his *history;* not so much his own Faustship, as the Tradition of Faust's adventures, and the Genius of the People among whom this took its rise. For, indeed, he has strange gifts of flying through the air, and living, in apparent friendship and contentment, with mere Eidolons; and, being excessively reserved withal, he becomes not a little enigmatic. In fact, our whole 'Interlude' changes its character at this point: the Greek style passes abruptly into the Spanish; at one bound we have left the *Seven before Thebes*, and got into the *Vida es Sueño*. The action, too, becomes more and more typical; or rather, we should say, half-typical; for it will neither hold rightly together as allegory nor as matter of fact.

Thus do we see ourselves hesitating on the verge of a wondrous region, 'neither sea nor good dry land;' full of shapes and musical tones, but all dim, fluctuating, unsubstantial, chaotic. Danger there is that the critic may require 'both oar and sail;' nay, it will be well if, like that other great Traveller, he meet not some vast vacuity, where, all unawares,

> Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drop
> Ten thousand fathom deep . . .

and so keep falling till

> The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
> Instinct with fire and nitre, hurry him
> As many miles aloft . . .

—Meaning, probably, that he is to be 'blown up' by nonplussed and justly exasperated Review-reviewers!—Nevertheless, unappalled by these possibilities, we venture forward into this impalpable Limbo; and must endeavour to render such account of the 'sensible species' and 'ghosts of defunct bodies' we may meet there, as shall be moderately satisfactory to the reader.

In the little notice from the Author, quoted above, we were bid specially observe in what way and manner Faust

would presume to court this World-beauty. We must say, his style of gallantry seems to us of the most chivalrous and high-flown description, if indeed it is not a little *euphuistic*. In their own eyes, Helena and her Chorus, encircled in this Gothic court, appear, for some minutes, no better than captives; but, suddenly issuing from galleries and portals, and descending the stairs in stately procession, are seen a numerous suite of Pages, whose gay habiliments and red downy cheeks are greatly admired by the Chorus: these bear with them a throne and canopy, with footstools and cushions, and every other necessary apparatus of royalty; the portable machine, as we gather from the Chorus, is soon put together; and Helena, being reverently beckoned into the same, is thus forthwith constituted Sovereign of the whole establishment. To herself such royalty still seems a little dubious; but no sooner have the Pages, in long train, fairly descended, than 'Faust appears above, on the stairs, in knightly court-dress 'of the middle ages, and with deliberate dignity comes down,' astonishing the poor 'feather-headed' Chorus with the gracefulness of his deportment and his more than human beauty. He leads with him a culprit in fetters; and, by way of introduction, explains to Helena that this man, Lynceus, has deserved death by his misconduct; but that to her, as Queen of the Castle, must appertain the right of dooming or of pardoning him. The crime of Lynceus is, indeed, of an extraordinary nature: he was Warder of the tower; but now, though gifted, as his name imports, with the keenest vision, he has failed in warning Faust that so august a visitor was approaching, and thus occasioned the most dreadful breach of politeness. Lynceus pleads guilty: quicksighted as a lynx, in usual cases, he has been blinded with excess of light, in this instance. While looking towards the orient at the 'course of morning,' he noticed a 'sun rise wonderfully in the south,' and, all his senses taken captive by such surprising beauty, he no longer knew his right hand from his left, or could move a limb, or utter a word, to announce her arrival. Under these peculiar circumstances, Helena sees room for extending the royal prerogative; and after express-

ing unfeigned regret at this so fatal influence of her charms over the whole male sex, dismisses the Warder with a reprieve. We must beg our readers to keep an eye on this Innamorato; for there may be meaning in him. Here is the pleading, which produced so fine an effect, given in his own words:

Let me kneel and let me view her,
Let me live, or let me die,
Slave to this high woman, truer
Than a bondsman born, am I.

Watching o'er the course of morning,
Eastward, as I mark it run,
Rose there, all the sky adorning,
Strangely in the south a sun.

Draws my look towards those places,
Not the valley, not the height,
Not the earth's or heaven's spaces;
She alone the queen of light.

Eyesight truly hath been lent me,
Like the lynx on highest tree;
Boots not; for amaze hath shent me:
Do I dream, or do I see?

Knew I aught; or could I ever
Think of tow'r or bolted gate?
Vapours waver, vapours sever,
Such a goddess comes in state!

Eye and heart I must surrender
Drown'd as in a radiant sea;
That high creature with her splendour
Blinding all hath blinded me.

I forgot the warder's duty;
Trumpet, challenge, word of call:
Chain me, threaten: sure this Beauty
Stills thy anger, saves her thrall.

Save him accordingly she did: but no sooner is he dismissed, and Faust has made a remark on the multitude of 'arrows' which she is darting forth on all sides, than Lynceus returns in a still madder humour. 'Re-enter Lynceus with a Chest, and Men carrying other Chests behind him.'

LYNCEUS.

Thou see'st me, Queen, again advance.
The wealthy begs of thee one glance ;
He look'd at thee, and feels e'er since
As beggar poor, and rich as prince.

What was I erst ? What am I grown ?
What have I meant, or done, or known ?
What boots the sharpest force of eyes ?
Back from thy throne it baffled flies.

From Eastward marching came we on,
And soon the West was lost and won :
A long broad army forth we pass'd,
The foremost knew not of the last.

The first did fall, the second stood,
The third hew'd-in with falchion good ;
And still the next had prowess more,
Forgot the thousands slain before.

We stormed along, we rushed apace,
The masters we from place to place.
And where I lordly ruled to-day,
To-morrow another did rob and slay.

We look'd ; our choice was quickly made ;
This snatch'd with him the fairest Maid ;
That seized the Steer for burden bent,
The horses all and sundry went.

But I did love apart to spy
The rarest things could meet the eye :
Whate'er in others' hands I saw,
That was for me but chaff and straw.

For treasures did I keep a look,
My keen eyes pierc'd to every nook ;
Into all pockets I could see,
Transparent each strong-box to me.

And heaps of Gold I gained this way,
And precious stones of clearest ray :
Now where's the Diamond meet to shine ?
'Tis meet alone for breast like thine.

So let the Pearl from depths of sea,
In curious stringlets wave on thee:
The Ruby for some covert seeks,
'Tis paled by redness of thy cheeks.

And so the richest treasure's brought
Before thy throne, as best it ought;
Beneath thy feet here let me lay
The fruit of many a bloody fray.

So many chests we now do bear;
More chests I have, and finer ware:
Think me but to be near thee worth,
Whole treasure-vaults I empty forth.

For scarcely art thou hither sent,
All hearts and wills to thee are bent;
Our riches, reason, strength we must
Before the loveliest lay as dust.

All this I reckon'd great, and mine,
Now small I reckon it, and thine.
I thought it worthy, high and good;
'Tis naught, poor and misunderstood.

So dwindles what my glory was,
A heap of mown and withered grass:
What worth it had, and now does lack,
O, with one kind look, give it back!

FAUST.

Away! away! take back the bold-earn'd load,
Not blam'd indeed, but also not rewarded.
Hers is already whatsoe'er our Tower
Of costliness conceals. Go heap me treasures
On treasures, yet with order: let the blaze
Of pomp unspeakable appear; the ceilings
Gem-fretted, shine like skies; a Paradise
Of lifeless life create. Before her feet
Unfolding quick, let flow'ry carpet roll
Itself from flow'ry carpet, that her step
May light on softness, and her eye meet naught
But splendour blinding only not the Gods.

LYNCEUS.

Small is what our Lord doth say;
Servants do it; 'tis but play:
For o'er all we do or dream
Will this Beauty reign supreme.
Is not all our host grown tame?
Every sword is blunt and lame.
To a form of such a mould
Sun himself is dull and cold;
To the richness of that face,
What is beauty, what is grace,
Loveliness we saw or thought?
All is empty, all is naught.

And herewith *exit* Lynceus, and we see no more of him. We have said that we thought there might be method in this madness. In fact, the allegorical, or at least fantastic and figurative, character of the whole action is growing more and more decided every moment. Helena, we must conjecture, is, in the course of this her real historical intrigue with Faust, to present, at the same time, some dim adumbration of Grecian Art, and its flight to the Northern Nations, when driven by stress of War from its own country. Faust's Tower will, in this case, afford not only a convenient station for *lifting black-mail* over the neighbouring district, but a cunning, though vague and fluctuating, emblem of the Product of Teutonic Mind; the Science, Art, Institutions of the Northmen, of whose Spirit and Genius he himself may in some degree become the representative. In this way, the extravagant homage and admiration paid to Helena are not without their meaning. The manner of her arrival, enveloped as she was in thick clouds, and frightened onwards by hostile trumpets, may also have more or less propriety. And who is Lynceus, the mad Watchman? We cannot but suspect him of being a Schoolman Philosopher, or School Philosophy itself, in disguise; and that this wonderful 'march' of his has a covert allusion to the great 'march of intellect,' which did march in those old ages, though only 'at ordinary time.' We observe, the military, one after the other, all fell; for discoverers, like

other men, must die; but 'still the next had prowess more,' and forgot the thousands that had sunk in clearing the way for him. However, Lynceus, in his love of plunder, did not take 'the fairest maid,' nor 'the steer' fit for burden, but rather jewels and other rare articles of value; in which quest his high power of eyesight proved of great service to him. Better had it been, perhaps, to have done as others did, and seized 'the fairest maid,' or even the 'steer' fit for burden, or one of the 'horses' which were in such request: for, when he quitted practical Science and the philosophy of Life, and addicted himself to curious subtleties and Metaphysical crotchets, what did it avail him? At the first glance of the Grecian beauty, he found that it was 'naught, poor and misunderstood.' His extraordinary obscuration of vision on Helena's approach; his narrow escape from death, on that account, at the hands of Faust; his pardon by the fair Greek; his subsequent magnanimous offer to her, and discourse with his master on the subject,—might give rise to various considerations. But we must not loiter, questioning the strange Shadows of that strange country, who, besides, are apt to mystify one. Our nearest business is to get across it: we again proceed.

Whoever or whatever Faust and Helena may be, they are evidently fast rising into high favour with each other; as indeed, from so generous a gallant, and so fair a dame, was to be anticipated. She invites him to sit with her on the throne, so instantaneously acquired by force of her charms; to which graceful proposal he, after kissing her hand in knightly wise, fails not to accede. The courtship now advances apace. Helena admires the dialect of Lynceus, and how 'one word seemed to kiss the other,' for the Warder, as we saw, speaks in doggrel; and she cannot but wish that she also had some such talent. Faust assures her that nothing is more easy than this same practice of rhyme: it is but speaking right from the heart, and the rest follows of course. Withal, he proposes that they should make a trial of it themselves. The experiment succeeds to mutual satisfaction: for not only can they two build the lofty rhyme in concert, with all con-

venience, but, in the course of a page or two of such crambo, many love-tokens come to light; nay, we find by the Chorus, that the wooing has well-nigh reached a happy end: at least, the two are 'sitting near and nearer each other,—shoul-'der on shoulder, knee by knee, hand in hand, they are sway-'ing over the throne's up-cushioned lordliness;' which, surely, are promising symptoms.

Such ill-timed dalliance is abruptly disturbed by the entrance of Phorcyas, now, as ever, a messenger of evil, with malignant tidings that Menelaus is at hand, with his whole force, to storm the Castle, and ferociously avenge his new injuries. An immense 'explosion of signals from the towers, 'of trumpets, clarions, military music, and the march of nu-'merous armies,' confirms the news. Faust, however, treats the matter coolly; chides the unceremonious trepidation of Phorcyas, and summons his men of war; who accordingly enter, steel-clad, in military pomp, and quitting their battalions, gather round him to take his orders. In a wild Pindaric ode, delivered with due emphasis, he directs them not so much how they are to conquer Menelaus, whom doubtless he knows to be a sort of dream, as how they are respectively to manage and partition the Country they shall hereby acquire. Germanus is to have 'the bays of Corinth;' while 'Achaia, with its hundred dells,' is recommended to the care of Goth; the host of the Franks must go towards Elis; Messene is to be the Saxon's share; and Normann is to clear the seas, and make Argolis great. Sparta, however, is to continue the territory of Helena, and be queen and patroness of these inferior Dukedoms. In all this, are we to trace some faint changeful shadow of the National Character, and respective Intellectual Performance of the several European tribes? Or, perhaps, of the real History of the Middle Ages; the irruption of the northern swarms, issuing, like Faust and his air-warriors, 'from Cimmerian Night,' and spreading over so many fair regions? Perhaps of both, and of more; perhaps properly of neither: for the whole has a chameleon character, changing hue as we look on it. However, be this as it may, the Chorus cannot sufficiently admire Faust's strate-

gic faculty ; and the troops march off, without speech indeed, but evidently in the highest spirits. He himself concludes with another rapid dithyrambic, describing the Peninsula of Greece, or rather, perhaps, typically the Region of true Poesy, 'kissed by the sea-waters,' and 'knit to the last mountain-branch' of the firm land. There is a wild glowing fire in these two odes ; a musical indistinctness, yet enveloping a rugged, keen sense, which, were the gift of rhyme so common as Faust thinks it, we should have pleasure in presenting to our readers. Again and again, we think of Calderon and his *Life a Dream.*

Faust, as he resumes his seat by Helena, observes that 'she is sprung from the highest gods, and belongs to the first world alone.' It is not meet that bolted towers should encircle her ; and near by Sparta, over the hills, 'Arcadia blooms in eternal strength of youth, a blissful abode for them two.' 'Let thrones pass into groves ; Arcadian-free be such felicity!' No sooner said than done. Our Fortress, we suppose, rushes asunder like a Palace of Air, for '*the scene* '*altogether changes. A series of Grottoes are now shut in by* '*close Bowers. Shady Grove, to the foot of the Rocks which* '*encircle the place. Faust and Helena are not seen. The* '*Chorus, scattered around, lie sleeping.*'

In Arcadia, the business grows wilder than ever. Phorcyas, who has now become wonderfully civil, and, notwithstanding her ugliness, stands on the best footing with the poor light-headed cicada-swarm of a Chorus, awakes them to hear and see the wonders that have happened so shortly. It appears too, that there are certain 'Bearded Ones' (we suspect, Devils) waiting with anxiety, 'sitting watchful there below,' to see the issue of this extraordinary transaction ; but of these Phorcyas gives her silly women no hint whatever. She tells them, in glib phrase, what great things are in the wind. Faust and Helena have been happier than mortals in these grottoes. Phorcyas, who was in waiting, gradually glided away, seeking 'roots, moss and rinds,' on household duty bent, and so 'they two remained alone.'

CHORUS.

Talk'st as if within those grottoes lay whole tracts of country,
Wood and meadow, rivers, lakes: what tales thou palm'st on us!

PHORCYAS.

Sure enough, ye foolish creatures! These are unexplored recesses;
Hall runs out on hall, spaces there on spaces: these I musing traced.
But at once re-echoes from within a peal of laughter:
Peeping in, what is it? Leaps a boy from Mother's breast to Father's,
From the Father to the Mother: such a fondling, such a dandling,
Foolish Love's caressing, teasing; cry of jest, and shriek of pleasure,
In their turn do stun me quite.
Naked, without wings a Genius, Faun in humour without coarseness,
Springs he sportful on the ground; but the ground reverberating,
Darts him up to airy heights; and at the third the second gambol,
Touches he the vaulted Roof.

Frightened cries the Mother: Bound away, away, and as thou pleasest,
But, my Son, beware of Flying; wings nor power of flight are thine.
And the Father thus advises: In the Earth resides the virtue
Which so fast doth send thee upwards; touch but with thy toe the surface,
Like the Earthborn, old Antæus, straightway thou art strong again.
And so skips he, hither, thither, on these jagged rocks; from summit
Still to summit, all about, like stricken ball rebounding, springs.

But at once in cleft of some rude cavern sinking has he vanished,
And so seems it we have lost him. Mother mourning, Father cheers her,
Shrug my shoulders I, and look about me. But again, behold, what vision!
Are there treasures lying here concealed? There he is again, and garments
Glittering, flower-bestriped has on.
Tassels waver from his arms, about his bosom flutter breast-knots,
In his hand the golden Lyre; wholly like a little Phœbus,
Steps he light of heart upon the beetling cliffs: astonished stand we,
And the Parents, in their rapture, fly into each other's arms.
For what glittering's that about his head? Were hard to say what glitters,
Whether Jewels and gold, or Flame of all-subduing strength of soul.
And with such a bearing moves he, in himself this boy announces
Future Master of all Beauty, whom the Melodies Eternal
Do inform through every fibre; and forthwith so shall ye hear him,
And forthwith so shall ye see him, to your uttermost amazement.

The Chorus suggest, in their simplicity, that this elastic little urchin may have some relationship to the 'Son of Maia,' who, in old times, whisked himself so nimbly out of his swaddling-clothes, and stole the 'Sea-ruler's trident' and 'Hephæstos' tongs,' and various other articles, before he was well span-long. But Phorcyas declares all this to be superannuated fable, unfit for modern uses. And now '*a beautiful* '*purely melodious music of stringed instruments resounds from* '*the Cave. All listen, and soon appear deeply moved. It con-* '*tinues playing in full tone;*' while Euphorion, in person, makes his appearance, '*in the costume above described;*' larger of stature, but no less frolicsome and tuneful.

Our readers are aware that this Euphorion, the offspring of Northern Character wedded to Grecian Culture, frisks it here not without reference to Modern Poesy, which had a birth so precisely similar. Sorry are we that we cannot follow him through these fine warblings and trippings on the light fantastic toe: to our ears there is a quick, pure, small-toned music in them, as perhaps of elfin bells when the Queen of Faëry rides by moonlight. It is, in truth, a graceful emblematic dance, this little life of Euphorion; full of meanings and half-meanings. The history of Poetry, traits of individual Poets; the Troubadours, the Three Italians; glimpses of all things, full vision of nothing!—Euphorion grows rapidly, and passes from one pursuit to another. Quitting his boyish gambols, he takes to dancing and romping with the Chorus; and this in a style of tumult which rather dissatisfies Faust. The wildest and coyest of these damsels he seizes with avowed intent of snatching a kiss; but, alas, she resists, and, still more singular, '*flashes up in flame into the air;*' inviting him, perhaps in mockery, to follow her, and 'catch his vanished purpose.' Euphorion shakes off the remnants of the flame, and now, in a wilder humour, mounts on the crags, begins to talk of courage and battle; higher and higher he rises, till the Chorus see him on the topmost cliff, shining 'in harness as for victory:' and yet, though at such a distance they still hear his tones, neither is his figure diminished in their eyes; which, indeed, as they observe,

always is, and should be, the case with 'sacred Poesy,' though it mounts heavenward, farther and farther, till it 'glitter like the fairest star.' But Euphorion's life-dance is near ending. From his high peak, he catches the sound of war, and fires at it, and longs to mix in it, let Chorus and Mother and Father say what they will.

EUPHORION.

And hear ye thunders on the ocean,
And thunders roll from tower and wall;
And host with host, in fierce commotion,
See mixing at the trumpet's call.
And to die in strife
Is the law of life,
That is certain once for all.

HELENA, FAUST, *and* CHORUS.

What a horror! spoken madly!
Wilt thou die? Then what must I?

EUPHORION.

Shall I view it, safe and gladly?
No! to share it will I hie.

HELENA, FAUST, *and* CHORUS.

Fatal are such haughty things;
War is for the stout.

EUPHORION.

Ha!—and a pair of wings
Folds itself out!
Thither! I must! I must!
'Tis my hest to fly!

[*He casts himself into the air; his Garments support him for a moment; his head radiates, a Train of Light follows him.*

CHORUS.

Icarus! earth and dust!
O, woe! thou mount'st too high.

[*A beautiful Youth rushes down at the feet of the Parents; you fancy you recognise in the dead a well-known Form;*[1] *but the bodily part instantly disappears; the gold Crownlet mounts like a comet to the sky; Coat, Mantle and Lyre are left lying.*

[1] It is perhaps in reference to this phrase, that certain sagacious critics among the Germans have hit upon the wonderful discovery of Euphorion being—Lord Byron! A fact, if it is one, which curiously verifies

HELENA *and* FAUST.

Joy soon changes to woe,
And mirth to heaviest moan.

EUPHORION'S *voice* (*from beneath*).

Let me not to realms below
Descend, O mother, alone!

The prayer is soon granted. The Chorus chaunt a dirge over the remains, and then :

HELENA (*to* FAUST).

A sad old saying proves itself again in me,
Good hap with beauty hath no long abode.
So with Love's band is Life's asunder rent :
Lamenting both, I clasp thee in my arms
Once more, and bid thee painfully farewell.
Persephoneia take my boy, and with him me.

[*She embraces* FAUST ; *her Body melts away ; Garment and Veil remain in his arms.*

PHORCYAS (*to* FAUST).

Hold fast what now alone remains to thee.
That Garment quit not. They are tugging there,
These Demons at the skirt of it ; would fain
To the Nether Kingdoms take it down. Hold fast,
The goddess it is not, whom thou hast lost,
Yet godlike is it. See thou use aright
The priceless high bequest, and soar aloft ;
'T will lift thee away above the common world,
Far up to Æther, so thou canst endure.
We meet again, far, very far from hence.

[HELENA'S *Garments unfold into Clouds, encircle* FAUST, *raise him aloft, and float away with him.* PHORCYAS *picks up* EUPHORION'S *Coat, Mantle and Lyre from the ground, comes forward into the Proscenium, holds these Remains aloft, and says :*

the author's prediction in this passage. But unhappily, while we fancy we recognise in the dead a well-known form, 'the bodily part instantly disappears ;' and the keenest critic finds that he can see no deeper into a millstone than another man. Some *allusion* to our English Poet there is, or may be here and in the page that precedes, and the page that follows ; but Euphorion is no image of any person ; least of all, one would think, of George Lord Byron.

Well, fairly found be happily won!
'Tis true, the Flame is lost and gone:
But well for us we have still this stuff!
A gala-dress to dub our poets of merit,
And make guild-brethren snarl and cuff;
And can't they borrow the Body and Spirit
At least, I'll lend them Clothes enough.
[*Sits down in the Proscenium at the foot of a pillar.*

The rest of the personages are now speedily disposed of. Panthalis, the Leader of the Chorus, and the only one of them who has shown any glimmerings of Reason, or of aught beyond mere sensitive life, mere love of Pleasure and fear of Pain, proposes that, being now delivered from the soul-confusing spell of the 'Thessalian Hag,' they should forthwith return to Hades, to bear Helena company. But none will volunteer with her; so she goes herself. The Chorus have lost their taste for Asphodel Meadows, and playing so subordinate a part in Orcus: they prefer abiding in the Light of Day, though, indeed, under rather peculiar circumstances; being no longer 'Persons,' they say, but a kind of Occult Qualities, as we conjecture, and Poetic Inspirations, residing in various natural objects. Thus, one division become a sort of invisible Hamadryads, and have their being in Trees, and their joy in the various movements, beauties and products of Trees. A second change into Echoes; a third, into the Spirits of Brooks; and a fourth take up their abode in Vineyards, and delight in the manufacture of Wine. No sooner have these several parties made up their minds, than the *Curtain falls;* and Phorcyas '*in the Proscenium rises in gigantic* '*size; but steps down from her cothurni, lays her Mask and Veil* '*aside, and shows herself as* MEPHISTOPHELES, *in order, so far as* '*may be necessary, to comment on the piece, by way of Epilogue.*'

Such is *Helena*, the *interlude in Faust*. We have all the desire in the world to hear Mephisto's Epilogue; but far be it from us to take the word out of so gifted a mouth! In the way of commentary on *Helena*, we ourselves have little more to add. The reader sees, in general, that Faust is to save him-

self from the straits and fetters of Worldly Life in the loftier regions of Art, or in that temper of mind by which alone those regions can be reached, and permanently dwelt in. Farther also, that this doctrine is to be stated emblematically and parabolically; so that it might seem as if, in Goethe's hands, the history of Faust, commencing among the realities of every-day existence, superadding to these certain spiritual agencies, and passing into a more aërial character as it proceeds, may fade away, at its termination, into a phantasmagoric region, where symbol and thing signified are no longer clearly distinguished; and thus the final result be curiously and significantly indicated, rather than directly exhibited. With regard to the special purport of Euphorion, Lynceus and the rest, we have nothing more to say at present; nay, perhaps we may have already said too much. For it must not be forgotten by the commentator, and will not, of a surety, be forgotten by Mephistopheles, whenever he may please to deliver his Epilogue, that *Helena* is not an Allegory, but a Phantasmagory; not a type of one thing, but a vague fluctuating fitful adumbration of many. This is no Picture painted on canvas, with mere material colours, and steadfastly abiding our scrutiny; but rather it is like the Smoke of a Wizard's Cauldron, in which, as we gaze on its flickering tints and wild splendours, thousands of strangest shapes unfold themselves, yet no one will abide with us; and thus, as Goethe says elsewhere, 'we are reminded of Nothing and of All.'

Properly speaking, *Helena* is what the Germans call a *Mährchen* (Fabulous Tale), a species of fiction they have particularly excelled in, and of which Goethe has already produced more than one distinguished specimen. Some day we propose to translate, for our readers, that little piece of his, deserving to be named, as it is, 'The *Mährchen*,' and which we must agree with a great critic in reckoning the 'Tale of all Tales.' As to the composition of this *Helena*, we cannot but perceive it to be deeply studied, appropriate and successful. It is wonderful with what fidelity the Classical style is maintained throughout the earlier part of the Poem; how skilfully it is at once united to the Romantic style of the latter part, and

made to reappear, at intervals, to the end. And then the small half-secret touches of sarcasm, the curious little traits by which we get a peep behind the curtain! Figure, for instance, that so transient allusion to these 'Bearded Ones sitting watchful there below,' and then their tugging at Helena's Mantle to pull it down with them. By such light hints does Mephistopheles point out our Whereabout; and ever and anon remind us, that not on the firm earth, but on the wide and airy Deep has he spread his strange pavilion, where, in magic light, so many wonders are displayed to us.

Had we chanced to find that Goethe, in other instances, had ever written one line without meaning, or many lines without a deep and true meaning, we should not have thought this little cloud-picture worthy of such minute development, or such careful study. In that case, too, we should never have seen the true *Helena* of Goethe, but some false one of our own too indolent imagination; for this Drama, as it grows clearer, grows also more beautiful and complete; and the third, the fourth perusal of it pleases far better than the first. Few living artists would deserve such faith from us; but few also would so well reward it.

On the general relation of *Helena* to *Faust*, and the degree of fitness of the one for the other, it were premature to speak more expressly at present. We have learned, on authority which we may justly reckon the best, that Goethe is even now engaged in preparing the Second Part of Faust, into which this *Helena* passes as a component part. With the third *Lieferung* of his Works, we understand, the beginning of that Second Part is to be published: we shall then, if need be, feel more qualified to speak.

For the present, therefore, we take leave of *Helena* and *Faust*, and of their Author: but with regard to the latter, our task is nowise ended; indeed, as yet, hardly begun; for it is not in the province of the *Mährchen* that Goethe will ever become most interesting to English readers. But, like his own Euphorion, though he rises aloft into Æther, he derives, Antæus-like, his strength from the Earth. The dullest plodder has not a more practical understanding, or a sounder or more

quiet character, than this most aërial and imaginative of poets. We hold Goethe to be the Foreigner, at this era, who, of all others, the best, and the best by many degrees, deserves our study and appreciation. What help we individually can give in such a matter, we shall consider it a duty and a pleasure to have in readiness. We propose to return, in our next Number, to the consideration of his Works and Character in general.

GOETHE.

GOETHE.

DIFFICULTY of justly estimating the worth of Goethe's works. British ignorance on the subject. Goethe's literary Kingship: His universal and undisputed ascendency. Singular value and interest of his Autobiography: Not written especially for 'persons of quality' in England, but for persons of heart and head in Europe. (59).—Goethe's unexampled reputation: A man's 'fame' no test of his real worth. In Goethe's writings is embodied the new Wisdom peculiar to the new Time. (61).—Goethe, a man who had struggled toughly: Spiritual growth of his mind as exhibited in his successive Works: He became a Believer, not by denying his unbelief but by following it out. Unbounded popularity and influence of his two earliest works. Lifeless condition of the literary world previous to the publication of the *Sorrows of Werter*. Germany: England: Influence of Locke: The French had discovered that 'as the stomach secretes Chyle, so does the brain secrete Thought.' Poetry degraded to a useful stimulant; and Religion to a superfluity by all means to be got rid of: Unbelief pressing with incubus force on the greater part of Europe. (70).—The poet a citizen not only of his country, but of his time: *Werter* the cry of that dim, rooted pain, under which thoughtful men everywhere were languishing: Byron's lifeweariness. Specimen of Werter's philosophy. Goethe's own account of the state of mind in which his *Sorrows of Werter* originated. (77).—His mental growth and attainment of victorious peace, evinced by *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*. Extract, showing the character and high vocation of the Poet; Goethe's faithfulness to that ideal. English and German criticisms of *Meister*. (84).—The *Wanderjahre;* its high and melodious wisdom. Extracts, showing Goethe's view of the nature, objects and present ground of Religious Belief; Symbolic picture of the moral culture of Childhood; Reverence; Significance of the Israelitish history; The Divine Life of Christ, as distinguished from his Divine Death; The Sanctuary of Sorrow. (92).—Few men of his age have arisen so triumphantly as Goethe, above all manner of doubt and discontent, into the freedom of actual belief and clear activity. Among our own poets, Byron alone struggled manfully to the end; and he died while the victory was, at best, only beginning to be gained. Goethe's literary claims: His peculiar emblematic intellect: Entire freedom from mannerism. His spiritual characteristics. Distinction between the original man and the merely popular man. Contrast of Goethe and Voltaire. (103).—To judge a man rightly, we must see his good qualities before pronouncing on his bad. What we mean by 'a fault.' The highest and noblest beauty of a poem. Goethe's faults. A true Poem not to be judged of by mere *taste*. Happy contractedness of men in general: Fractional and universal standards. A deeper feeling for Art abroad over Europe. Our own ancient noble Literature will one day be studied and felt, as well as talked of. (113).

GOETHE.[1]

[1828.]

It is not on this 'Second Portion' of Goethe's Works, which at any rate contains nothing new to us, that we mean at present to dwell. In our last Number, we engaged to make some survey of his writings and character in general; and must now endeavour, with such insight as we have, to fulfil that promise.

We have already said that we reckoned this no unimportant subject; and few of Goethe's readers can need to be reminded that it is no easy one. We hope also that our pretensions in regard to it are not exorbitant; the sum of our aims being nowise to solve so deep and pregnant an inquiry, but only to show that an inquiry of such a sort lies ready for solution; courts the attention of thinking men among us, nay merits a thorough investigation, and must sooner or later obtain it. Goethe's literary history appears to us a matter, beyond most others, of rich, subtle and manifold significance; which will require and reward the best study of the best heads, and to the right exposition of which not one but many judgments will be necessary.

However, we need not linger, preluding on our own inability, and magnifying the difficulties we have so courageously volunteered to front. Considering the highly com-

[1] Foreign Review, No. 3.—*Goethes Sämmtliche Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand.* (Goethe's Collective Works. Complete Edition, with his final Corrections.)—Second Portion, vol. vi.–x. Cotta; Stuttgard and Tübingen, 1827.

plex aspect which such a mind of itself presents to us; and, still more, taking into account the state of English opinion in respect of it, there certainly seem few literary questions of our time so perplexed, dubious, perhaps hazardous, as this of the character of Goethe; but few also on which a well-founded, or even a sincere word would be more likely to profit. For our countrymen, at no time indisposed to foreign excellence, but at all times cautious of foreign singularity, have heard much of Goethe; but heard, for the most part, what excited and perplexed rather than instructed them. Vague rumours of the man have, for more than half a century, been humming through our ears: from time to time, we have even seen some distorted, mutilated transcript of his own thoughts, which, all obscure and hieroglyphical as it might often seem, failed not to emit here and there a ray of keenest and purest sense; travellers also are still running to and fro, importing the opinions or, at worst, the gossip of foreign countries: so that, by one means or another, many of us have come to understand, that considerably the most distinguished poet and thinker of his age is called Goethe, and lives at Weimar, and must, to all appearance, be an extremely surprising character: but here, unhappily, our knowledge almost terminates; and still must Curiosity, must ingenuous love of Information and mere passive Wonder alike inquire: What manner of man *is* this? How shall we interpret, how shall we even see him? What is his spiritual structure, what at least are the outward form and features of his mind? Has he any real poetic worth: how much to his own people, how much to us?

Reviewers, of great and of small character, have manfully endeavoured to satisfy the British world on these points: but which of us could believe their report? Did it not rather become apparent, as we reflected on the matter, that this Goethe of theirs was not the real man, nay could not be any real man whatever? For what, after all, were their portraits of him but copies, with some retouchings and ornamental appendages, of our grand English original Picture of the German generally?—In itself such a piece of art, as national portraits, under like circumstances, are wont to be; and resembling

Goethe, as some unusually expressive Sign of the Saracen's Head may resemble the present Sultan of Constantinople!

Did we imagine that much information, or any very deep sagacity were required for avoiding such mistakes, it would ill become us to step forward on this occasion. But surely it is given to every man, if he will but take heed, to know so much as whether or not he *knows*. And nothing can be plainer to us than that if, in the present business, we can report *aught* from our own personal vision and clear hearty belief, it will be a useful novelty in the discussion of it. Let the reader be patient with us then; and according as he finds that we speak honestly and earnestly, or loosely and dishonestly, consider our statement, or dismiss it as unworthy of consideration.

Viewed in his merely external relations, Goethe exhibits an appearance such as seldom occurs in the history of letters, and indeed, from the nature of the case, can seldom occur. A man who, in early life, rising almost at a single bound into the highest reputation over all Europe; by gradual advances, fixing himself more and more firmly in the reverence of his countrymen, ascends silently through many vicissitudes to the supreme intellectual place among them; and now, after half a century, distinguished by convulsions, political, moral and poetical, still reigns, full of years and honours, with a soft undisputed sway; still labouring in his vocation, still forwarding, as with kingly benignity, whatever can profit the culture of his nation: such a man might justly attract our notice, were it only by the singularity of his fortune. Supremacies of this sort are rare in modern times; so universal, and of such continuance, they are almost unexampled. For the age of the Prophets and Theologic Doctors has long since passed away; and now it is by much slighter, by transient and mere earthly ties, that bodies of men connect themselves with a man. The wisest, most melodious voice cannot in these days pass for a divine one; the word Inspiration still lingers, but only in the shape of a poetic figure, from which the once earnest, awful and soul-subduing sense has vanished

without return. The polity of Literature is called a Republic; oftener it is an Anarchy, where, by strength or fortune, favourite after favourite rises into splendour and authority, but, like Masaniello, while judging the people, is on the third day deposed and shot. Nay, few such adventurers can attain even this painful pre-eminence: for at most, it is clear, any given age can have but one first man; many ages have only a crowd of secondary men, each of whom is first in his own eyes: and seldom, at best, can the 'Single Person' long keep his station at the head of this wild commonwealth; most sovereigns are never universally acknowledged, least of all in their lifetime; few of the acknowledged can reign peaceably to the end.

Of such a perpetual dictatorship Voltaire among the French gives the last European instance; but even with him it was perhaps a much less striking affair. Voltaire reigned over a sect, less as their lawgiver than as their general; for he was at bitter enmity with the great numerical majority of his nation, by whom his services, far from being acknowledged as benefits, were execrated as abominations. But Goethe's object has, at all times, been rather to unite than to divide; and though he has not scrupled, as occasion served, to speak forth his convictions distinctly enough on many delicate topics, and seems, in general, to have paid little court to the prejudices or private feelings of any man or body of men, we see not at present that his merits are anywhere disputed, his intellectual endeavours controverted, or his person regarded otherwise than with affection and respect. In later years, too, the advanced age of the poet has invested him with another sort of dignity; and the admiration to which his great qualities give him claim is tempered into a milder, grateful feeling, almost as of sons and grandsons to their common father. Dissentients, no doubt, there are and must be; but, apparently, their cause is not pleaded in words: no man of the smallest note speaks on that side; or at most, such men may question, not the worth of Goethe, but the cant and idle affectation with which, in many quarters, this must be promulgated and bepraised. Certainly there is not, probably there never was, in any European country, a writer who, with so cunning

a style, and so deep, so abstruse a sense, ever found so many readers. For, from the peasant to the king, from the callow dilettante and innamorato, to the grave transcendental philosopher, men of all degrees and dispositions are familiar with the writings of Goethe: each studies them with affection, with a faith which, 'where it cannot unriddle, learns to trust;' each takes with him what he is adequate to carry, and departs thankful for his own allotment. Two of Goethe's intensest admirers are Schelling of Munich, and a worthy friend of ours in Berlin; one of these among the deepest men in Europe, the other among the shallowest.

All this is, no doubt, singular enough; and a proper understanding of it would throw light on many things. Whatever we may think of Goethe's ascendency, the existence of it remains a highly curious fact; and to trace its history, to discover by what steps such influence has been attained, and how so long preserved, were no trivial or unprofitable inquiry. It would be worth while to see so strange a man for his own sake; and here we should see, not only the man himself, and his own progress and spiritual development, but the progress also of his nation: and this at no sluggish or even quiet era, but in times marked by strange revolutions of opinions, by angry controversies, high enthusiasm, novelty of enterprise, and doubtless, in many respects, by rapid advancement: for that the Germans have been, and still are, restlessly struggling forward, with honest unwearied effort, sometimes with enviable success, no one, who knows them, will deny; and as little, that in every province of Literature, and Art and humane accomplishment, the influence, often the direct guidance of Goethe may be recognised. The history of his mind is, in fact, at the same time, the history of German culture in his day: for whatever excellence this individual might realise has sooner or later been acknowledged and appropriated by his country; and the title of *Musagetes*, which his admirers give him, is perhaps, in sober strictness, not unmerited. Be it for good or for evil, there is certainly no German, since the days of Luther, whose life can occupy so large a space in the intellectual history of that people.

In this point of view, were it in no other, Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, so soon as it is completed, may deserve to be reckoned one of his most interesting works. We speak not of its literary merits, though in that respect, too, we must say that few Autobiographies have come in our way, where so difficult a matter was so successfully handled; where perfect knowledge could be found united so kindly with perfect tolerance; and a personal narrative, moving along in soft clearness, showed us a man, and the objects that environed him, under an aspect so verisimilar, yet so lovely, with an air dignified and earnest, yet graceful, cheerful, even gay: a story as of a Patriarch to his children; such, indeed, as few men can be called upon to relate, and few, if called upon, could relate so well. What would we give for such an Autobiography of Shakspeare, of Milton, even of Pope or Swift!

The *Dichtung und Wahrheit* has been censured considerably in England; but not, we are inclined to believe, with any insight into its proper meaning. The misfortune of the work among us was, that we did not know the narrator *before* his narrative; and could not judge what sort of narrative he was bound to give, in these circumstances, or whether he was bound to give any at all. We saw nothing of his situation; heard only the sound of his voice; and hearing it, never doubted but he must be perorating in official garments from the rostrum, instead of speaking trustfully by the fireside. For the chief ground of offence seemed to be, that the story was not noble enough; that it entered on details of too poor and private a nature; verged here and there towards garrulity; was not, in one word, written in the style of what we call a *gentleman*. Whether it might be written in the style of a *man*, and how far these two styles might be compatible, and what might be their relative worth and preferableness, was a deeper question; to which apparently no heed had been given. Yet herein lay the very cream of the matter; for Goethe was not writing to 'persons of quality' in England, but to persons of heart and head in Europe: a somewhat different problem perhaps, and requiring a somewhat different solution. As to this ignobleness and freedom of detail, es-

pecially, we may say, that, to a German, few accusations could appear more surprising than this, which, with us, constitutes the head and front of his offending. Goethe, in his own country, far from being accused of undue familiarity towards his readers, had, up to that date, been labouring under precisely the opposite charge. It was his stateliness, his reserve, his indifference, his contempt for the public, that were censured. Strange, almost inexplicable, as many of his works might appear; loud, sorrowful and altogether stolid as might be the criticisms they underwent, no word of explanation could be wrung from him; he had never even deigned to write a preface. And in later and juster days, when the study of Poetry came to be prosecuted in another spirit, and it was found that Goethe was standing, not like a culprit to plead for himself before the literary *plebeians*, but like a high teacher and preacher, speaking for truth, to whom both *plebeians* and *patricians* were bound to give all ear, the outward difficulty of interpreting his works began indeed to vanish; but enough still remained, nay increased curiosity had given rise to new difficulties, and deeper inquiries. Not only *what* were these works, but *how* did they originate, became questions for the critic. Yet several of Goethe's chief productions, and of his smaller poems nearly the whole, seemed so intimately interwoven with his private history, that, without some knowledge of this, no answer to such questions could be given. Nay commentaries have been written on single pieces of his, endeavouring, by way of guess, to supply this deficiency.[1] We can thus judge whether, to the Germans, such minuteness of exposition in this *Dichtung und Wahrheit* may have seemed a sin. Few readers of Goethe, we believe, but would wish rather to see it extended than curtailed.

It is our duty also to remark, if any one be still unaware of it, that the *Memoirs of Goethe*, published some years ago in London, can have no real concern with this Autobiography. The rage of hunger is an excuse for much; otherwise that German Translator, whom indignant Reviewers

[1] See, in particular, Dr. Kannegiesser *Ueber Goethes Harzreise im Winter* 1820.

have proved to know *no* German, were a highly reprehensible man. His work, it appears, is done from the French, and shows subtractions, and what is worse, additions. But the unhappy Dragoman has already been chastised, perhaps too sharply. If, warring with the reefs and breakers and cross eddies of Life, he still hover on this side the shadow of Night, and any word of ours might reach him, we would rather say: Courage, Brother! grow honest, and times will mend!

It would appear, then, that for inquirers into Foreign Literature, for all men anxious to see and understand the European world as it lies around them, a great problem is presented in this Goethe; a singular, highly significant phenomenon, and now also means more or less complete for ascertaining its significance. A man of wonderful, nay, unexampled reputation and intellectual influence among forty millions of reflective, serious and cultivated men, invites us to study him; and to determine for ourselves, whether and how far such influence has been salutary, such reputation merited. That this call will one day be answered, that Goethe will be seen and judged of in his real character among us, appears certain enough. His name, long familiar everywhere, has now awakened the attention of critics in all European countries to his works: he is studied wherever true study exists: eagerly studied even in France; nay, some considerable knowledge of his nature and spiritual importance seems already to prevail there.[1]

For ourselves, meanwhile, in giving all due weight to so curious an exhibition of opinion, it is doubtless our part, at the same time, to beware that we do not give it too much. This universal sentiment of admiration is wonderful, is interesting enough; but it must not lead us astray. We English stand as yet without the sphere of it; neither will we plunge blindly in, but enter considerately, or, if we see good, keep aloof from it altogether. Fame, we may under-

[1] Witness *Le Tasse, Drame par Duval*, and the Criticisms on it. See also the Essays in the *Globe*, Nos. 55, 64 (1826).

stand, is no sure test of merit, but only a probability of such: it is an accident, not a property, of a man; like light, it can give little or nothing, but at most may show what is given; often it is but a false glare, dazzling the eyes of the vulgar, lending by casual extrinsic splendour the brightness and manifold glance of the diamond to pebbles of no value. A man is in all cases simply *the* man, of the same intrinsic worth and weakness, whether his worth and weakness lie hidden in the depths of his own consciousness, or be betrumpeted and beshouted from end to end of the habitable globe. These are plain truths, which no one should lose sight of; though, whether in love or in anger, for praise or for condemnation, most of us are too apt to forget them. But least of all can it become the critic to 'follow a multitude to do evil,' even when that evil is excess of admiration: on the contrary, it will behove him to lift up his voice, how feeble soever, how unheeded soever, against the common delusion; from which, if he can save, or help to save, any mortal, his endeavours will have been repaid.

With these things in some measure before us, we must remind our readers of another influence at work in this affair, and one acting, as we think, in the contrary direction. That pitiful enough desire for 'originality,' which lurks and acts in all minds, will rather, we imagine, lead the critic of Foreign Literature to adopt the negative than the affirmative with regard to Goethe. If a writer indeed feel that he is writing for England alone, invisibly and inaudibly to the rest of the Earth, the temptations may be pretty equally balanced; if he write for some small conclave, which he mistakenly thinks the representative of England, they may sway this way or that, as it chances. But writing in such isolated spirit is no longer possible. Traffic, with its swift ships, is uniting all nations into one; Europe at large is becoming more and more one public; and in this public, the voices for Goethe, compared with those against him, are in the proportion, as we reckon them, both as to the number and value, of perhaps a hundred to one. We take in, not Germany alone, but France and Italy; not the Schlegels and Schellings, but the Manzonis and De Staëls.

The bias of originality, therefore, may lie to the side of censure; and whoever among us shall step forward, with such knowledge as our common critics have of Goethe, to enlighten the European public, by contradiction in this matter, displays a heroism, which, in estimating his other merits, ought nowise to be forgotten.

Our own view of the case coincides, we confess, in some degree with that of the majority. We reckon that Goethe's fame has, to a considerable extent, been deserved; that his influence has been of high benefit to his own country; nay more, that it promises to be of benefit to us, and to all other nations. The essential grounds of this opinion, which to explain minutely were a long, indeed boundless task, we may state without many words. We find, then, in Goethe, an Artist, in the high and ancient meaning of that term; in the meaning which it may have borne long ago among the masters of Italian painting, and the fathers of Poetry in England; we say that we trace in the creations of this man, belonging in every sense to our own time, some touches of that old, divine spirit, which had long passed away from among us, nay which, as has often been laboriously demonstrated, was not to return to this world any more.

Or perhaps we come nearer our meaning, if we say that in Goethe we discover by far the most striking instance, in our time, of a writer who is, in strict speech, what Philosophy can call a Man. He is neither noble nor plebeian, neither liberal nor servile, nor infidel nor devotee; but the best excellence of *all* these, joined in pure union; 'a clear and universal *Man*.' Goethe's poetry is no separate faculty, no mental handicraft; but the voice of the whole harmonious manhood: nay it is the very harmony, the living and life-giving harmony of that rich manhood which forms his poetry. All good men may be called poets in act, or in word; all good poets are so in both. But Goethe besides appears to us as a person of that deep endowment, and gifted vision, of that experience also and sympathy in the ways of all men, which qualify him to stand forth, not only as the literary ornament, but in many respects too as the Teacher and exemplar of his age. For, to say nothing

of his natural gifts, he has cultivated himself and his art, he has studied how to live and to write, with a fidelity, an unwearied earnestness, of which there is no other living instance; of which, among British poets especially, Wordsworth alone offers any resemblance. And this in our view is the result. To our minds, in these soft, melodious imaginations of his, there is embodied the Wisdom which is proper to this time; the beautiful, the religious Wisdom, which may still, with something of its old impressiveness, speak to the whole soul; still, in these hard, unbelieving utilitarian days, reveal to us glimpses of the Unseen but not unreal World, that so the Actual and the Ideal may again meet together, and clear Knowledge be again wedded to Religion, in the life and business of men.

Such is our conviction or persuasion with regard to the poetry of Goethe. Could we demonstrate this opinion to be true, could we even exhibit it with that degree of clearness and consistency which it has attained in our own thoughts, Goethe were, on our part, sufficiently recommended to the best attention of all thinking men. But, unhappily, it is not a subject susceptible of demonstration: the merits and characteristics of a Poet are not to be set forth by logic; but to be gathered by personal, and as in this case it must be, by deep and careful inspection of his works. Nay Goethe's world is everyway so different from ours; it costs us such effort, we have so much to remember, and so much to forget, before we can transfer ourselves in any measure into his peculiar point of vision, that a right study of him, for an Englishman, even of ingenuous, open, inquisitive mind, becomes unusually difficult; for a fixed, decided, contemptuous Englishman, next to impossible. To a reader of the first class, helps may be given, explanations will remove many a difficulty; beauties that lay hidden may be made apparent; and directions, adapted to his actual position, will at length guide him into the proper tract for such an inquiry. All this, however, must be a work of progression and detail. To do our part in it, from time to time, must rank among the best duties of an English Foreign Review. Meanwhile, our present endeavour limits itself

within far narrower bounds. We cannot aim to make Goethe known, but only to prove that he is worthy of being known; at most, to point out, as it were afar off, the path by which some knowledge of him may be obtained. A slight glance at his general literary character and procedure, and one or two of his chief productions which throw light on these, must for the present suffice.

A French diplomatic personage, contemplating Goethe's physiognomy, is said to have observed: *Voilà un homme qui a eu beaucoup de chagrins.* A truer version of the matter, Goethe himself seems to think, would have been: Here is a man who has struggled toughly; who has *es sich recht sauer werden lassen.* Goethe's life, whether as a writer and thinker, or as a living active man, has indeed been a life of effort, of earnest toilsome endeavour after all excellence. Accordingly, his intellectual progress, his spiritual and moral history, as it may be gathered from his successive Works, furnishes, with us, no small portion of the pleasure and profit we derive from perusing them. Participating deeply in all the influences of his age, he has from the first, at every new epoch, stood forth to elucidate the new circumstances of the time; to offer the instruction, the solace, which that time required. His literary life divides itself into two portions widely different in character: the products of the first, once so new and original, have long, either directly or through the thousand thousand imitations of them, been familiar to us; with the products of the second, equally original, and in our day far more precious, we are yet little acquainted. These two classes of works stand curiously related with each other; at first view, in strong contradiction, yet, in truth, connected together by the strictest sequence. For Goethe has not only suffered and mourned in bitter agony under the spiritual perplexities of his time; but he has also mastered these, he is above them, and has shown others how to rise above them. At one time, we found him in darkness, and now he is in light; he was once an Unbeliever, and now he is a Believer; and he believes, moreover, not by denying his unbelief, but by following it out; not by stopping short, still

less turning back, in his inquiries, but by resolutely prosecuting them. This, it appears to us, is a case of singular interest, and rarely exemplified, if at all elsewhere, in these our days. How has this man, to whom the world once offered nothing but blackness, denial and despair, attained to that better vision which now shows it to him, not tolerable only, but full of solemnity and loveliness? How has the belief of a Saint been united in this high and true mind with the clearness of a Sceptic; the devout spirit of a Fenelon made to blend in soft harmony with the gaiety, the sarcasm, the shrewdness of a Voltaire?

Goethe's two earliest works are *Götz von Berlichingen* and the *Sorrows of Werter*. The boundless influence and popularity they gained, both at home and abroad, is well known. It was they that established almost at once his literary fame in his own country; and even determined his subsequent private history, for they brought him into contact with the Duke of Weimar; in connexion with whom, the Poet, engaged in manifold duties, political as well as literary, has lived for fifty-four years, and still, in honourable retirement, continues to live.[1] Their effects over Europe at large were not less striking than in Germany.

'It would be difficult,' observes a writer on this subject, 'to name two books which have exercised a deeper influence on the subsequent literature of Europe, than these two performances of a young author; his first-fruits, the produce of his twenty-fourth year. *Werter* appeared to seize the hearts of men in all quarters of the world, and to utter for them the word which they had long been waiting to hear. As usually happens, too, this same word, once uttered, was soon abundantly repeated; spoken in all dialects, and chaunted through all notes of the gamut, till the sound of it had grown a weariness rather than a pleasure. Sceptical sentimentality, view-hunting, love, friendship, suicide, and desperation, became the staple of literary ware; and though the epidemic, after a long course of years, subsided in Germany, it reappeared with va-

[1] Since the above was written, that worthy Prince,—worthy, we have understood, in all respects, exemplary in whatever concerned Literature and the Arts,—has been called suddenly away. He died on his road from Berlin, near Torgau, on the 24th of June.

rious modifications in other countries, and everywhere abundant traces of its good and bad effects are still to be discerned. The fortune of *Berlichingen with the Iron Hand*, though less sudden, was by no means less exalted. In his own country, *Götz*, though he now stands solitary and childless, became the parent of an innumerable progeny of chivalry plays, feudal delineations, and poetico-antiquarian performances; which, though long ago deceased, made noise enough in their day and generation: and with ourselves, his influence has been perhaps still more remarkable. Sir Walter Scott's first literary enterprise was a translation of *Götz von Berlichingen;* and, if genius could be communicated like instruction, we might call this work of Goethe's the prime cause of *Marmion* and the *Lady of the Lake*, with all that has followed from the same creative hand. Truly, a grain of seed that has lighted on the right soil! For if not firmer and fairer, it has grown to be taller and broader than any other tree; and all the nations of the earth are still yearly gathering of its fruit.

'But overlooking these spiritual genealogies, which bring little certainty and little profit, it may be sufficient to observe of *Berlichingen* and *Werter*, that they stand prominent among the causes, or, at the very least, among the signals of a great change in modern literature. The former directed men's attention with a new force to the picturesque effects of the Past; and the latter, for the first time, attempted the more accurate delineation of a class of feelings deeply important to modern minds, but for which our elder poetry offered no exponent, and perhaps could offer none, because they are feelings that arise from Passion incapable of being converted into Action, and belong chiefly to an age as indolent, cultivated and unbelieving as our own. This, notwithstanding the dash of falsehood which may exist in *Werter* itself, and the boundless delirium of extravagance which it called forth in others, is a high praise which cannot justly be denied it. The English reader ought also to understand that our current version of *Werter* is mutilated and inaccurate: it comes to us through the all-subduing medium of the French, shorn of its caustic strength, with its melancholy rendered maudlin, its hero reduced from the stately gloom of a broken-hearted poet to the tearful wrangling of a dyspeptic tailor.'[1]

To the same dark wayward mood, which, in *Werter*, pours itself forth in bitter wailings over human life; and, in *Ber-*

[1] German Romance, vol. iv. pp. 5–7. (Appendix I. § *Goethe*, infra.)

lichingen, appears as a fond and sad looking back into the Past, belong various other productions of Goethe's; for example, the *Mitschuldigen*, and the first idea of *Faust*, which, however, was not realised in actual composition till a calmer period of his history. Of this early harsh and crude, yet fervid and genial period, *Werter* may stand here as the representative; and, viewed in its external and internal relation, will help to illustrate both the writer and the public he was writing for.

At the present day, it would be difficult for us, satisfied, nay sated to nausea, as we have been with the doctrines of Sentimentality, to estimate the boundless interest which *Werter* must have excited when first given to the world. It was then new in all senses; it was wonderful, yet wished for, both in its own country and in every other. The Literature of Germany had as yet but partially awakened from its long torpor: deep learning, deep reflection, have at no time been wanting there; but the creative spirit had for above a century been almost extinct. Of late, however, the Ramlers, Rabeners, Gellerts, had attained to no inconsiderable polish of style; Klopstock's *Messias* had called forth the admiration, and perhaps still more the pride, of the country, as a piece of art; a high enthusiasm was abroad; Lessing had roused the minds of men to a deeper and truer interest in Literature, had even decidedly begun to introduce a heartier, warmer and more expressive style. The Germans were on the alert; in expectation, or at least in full readiness for some far bolder impulse; waiting for the Poet that might speak to them from the heart to the heart. It was in Goethe that such a Poet was to be given them.

Nay the Literature of other countries, placid, self-satisfied as they might seem, was in an equally expectant condition. Everywhere, as in Germany, there was polish and languor, external glitter and internal vacuity; it was not fire, but a picture of fire, at which no soul could be warmed. Literature had sunk from its former vocation: it no longer held the mirror up to Nature; no longer reflected, in many-coloured expressive symbols, the actual passions, the hopes, sorrows,

joys of living men; but dwelt in a remote conventional world, in *Castles of Otranto*, in *Epigoniads* and *Leonidases*, among clear, metallic heroes, and white, high, stainless beauties, in whom the drapery and elocution were nowise the least important qualities. Men thought it right that the heart should swell into magnanimity with Caractacus and Cato, and melt into sorrow with many an Eliza and Adelaide; but the heart was in no haste either to swell or to melt. Some pulses of heroical sentiment, a few *un*natural tears might, with conscientious readers, be actually squeezed forth on such occasions: but they came only from the surface of the mind; nay, had the conscientious man considered of the matter, he would have found that they ought not to have come at all. Our only English poet of the period was Goldsmith; a pure, clear, genuine spirit, had he been of depth or strength sufficient: his *Vicar of Wakefield* remains the best of all modern Idyls; but it is and was nothing more. And consider our leading writers; consider the poetry of Gray, and the prose of Johnson. The first a laborious mosaic, through the hard stiff lineaments of which little life or true grace could be expected to look: real feeling, and all freedom of expressing it, are sacrificed to pomp, to cold splendour; for vigour we have a certain mouthing vehemence, too elegant indeed to be tumid, yet essentially foreign to the heart, and seen to extend no deeper than the mere voice and gestures. Were it not for his *Letters*, which are full of warm exuberant power, we might almost doubt whether Gray was a man of genius; nay, was a living man at all, and not rather some thousand-times more cunningly devised poetical turning-loom, than that of Swift's Philosophers in Laputa. Johnson's prose is true, indeed, and sound, and full of practical sense: few men have seen more clearly into the motives, the interests, the whole walk and conversation of the living busy world as it lay before him; but farther than this busy, and to most of us, rather prosaic world, he seldom looked: his instruction is for men of business, and in regard to matters of business alone. Prudence is the highest Virtue he can inculcate; and for that finer portion of our nature, that portion of it which belongs essentially

to Literature strictly so called, where our highest feelings, our best joys and keenest sorrows, our Doubt, our Love, our Religion reside, he has no word to utter; no remedy, no counsel to give us in our straits; or at most, if, like poor Boswell, the patient is importunate, will answer: "My dear Sir, endeavour to clear your mind of Cant."

The turn which Philosophical speculation had taken in the preceding age corresponded with this tendency, and enhanced its narcotic influences; or was, indeed, properly speaking, the root they had sprung from. Locke, himself a clear, humble-minded, patient, reverent, nay religious man, had paved the way for banishing religion from the world. Mind, by being modelled in men's imaginations into a Shape, a Visibility; and reasoned of as if it had been some composite, divisible and reunitable substance, some finer chemical salt, or curious piece of logical joinery,—began to lose its immaterial, mysterious, divine though invisible character: it was tacitly figured as something that might, were our organs fine enough, be *seen*. Yet who had ever seen it? Who could ever see it? Thus by degrees it passed into a Doubt, a Relation, some faint Possibility; and at last into a highly-probable Nonentity. Following Locke's footsteps, the French had discovered that 'as the stomach secretes Chyle, so does the brain secrete Thought.' And what then was Religion, what was Poetry, what was all high and heroic feeling? Chiefly a delusion; often a false and pernicious one. Poetry, indeed, was still to be preserved; because Poetry was a useful thing: men needed amusement, and loved to amuse themselves with Poetry: the playhouse was a pretty lounge of an evening; then there were so many precepts, satirical, didactic, so much more impressive for the rhyme; to say nothing of your occasional verses, birthday odes, epithalamiums, epicediums, by which 'the dream of existence may be so highly sweetened and embellished.' Nay, does not Poetry, acting on the imaginations of men, excite them to daring purposes; sometimes, as in the case of Tyrtæus, to fight better; in which wise may it not rank as a useful stimulant to man, along with Opium and Scotch Whisky, the manufacture of

which is allowed by law? In Heaven's name, then, let Poetry be preserved.

With Religion, however, it fared somewhat worse. In the eyes of Voltaire and his disciples, Religion was a superfluity, indeed a nuisance. Here, it is true, his followers have since found that he went too far; that Religion, being a great sanction to civil morality, is of use for keeping society in order, at least the lower classes, who have not the feeling of Honour in due force; and therefore, as a considerable help to the Constable and Hangman, *ought* decidedly to be kept up. But such toleration is the fruit only of later days. In those times, there was no question but how to get rid of it, root and branch, the sooner the better. A gleam of zeal, nay we will call it, however basely alloyed, a glow of real enthusiasm and love of truth, may have animated the minds of these men, as they looked abroad on the pestilent jungle of Superstition, and hoped to clear the earth of it forever. This little glow, so alloyed, so contaminated with pride and other poor or bad admixtures, was the last which thinking men were to experience in Europe for a time. So is it always in regard to Religious Belief, how degraded and defaced soever: the delight of the Destroyer and Denier is no pure delight, and must soon pass away. With bold, with skilful hand, Voltaire set his torch to the jungle: it blazed aloft to heaven; and the flame exhilarated and comforted the incendiaries; but, unhappily, such comfort could not continue. Ere long this flame, with its cheerful light and heat, was gone: the jungle, it is true, had been consumed; but, with its entanglements, its shelter and its spots of verdure also; and the black, chill, ashy swamp, left in its stead, seemed for a time a greater evil than the other.

In such a state of painful obstruction, extending itself everywhere over Europe, and already master of Germany, lay the general mind, when Goethe first appeared in Literature. Whatever belonged to the finer nature of man had withered under the Harmattan breath of Doubt, or passed away in the conflagration of open Infidelity; and now, where the Tree of Life once bloomed and brought fruit of goodliest savour,

there was only barrenness and desolation. To such as could find sufficient interest in the day-labour and day-wages of earthly existence; in the resources of the five bodily Senses, and of Vanity, the only mental sense which yet flourished, which flourished indeed with gigantic vigour, matters were still not so bad. Such men helped themselves forward, as they will generally do; and found the world, if not an altogether proper sphere (for every man, disguise it as he may, has a *soul* in him), at least a tolerable enough place; where, by one item and another, some comfort, or show of comfort, might from time to time be got up, and these few years, especially since they were so few, be spent without much murmuring. But to men afflicted with the 'malady of Thought,' some devoutness of temper was an inevitable heritage: to such the noisy forum of the world could appear but an empty, altogether insufficient concern; and the whole scene of life had become hopeless enough. Unhappily, such feelings are yet by no means so infrequent with ourselves, that we need stop here to depict them. That state of Unbelief from which the Germans do seem to be in some measure delivered, still presses with incubus force on the greater part of Europe; and nation after nation, each in its own way, feels that the first of all moral problems is how to cast it off, or how to rise above it. Governments naturally attempt the first expedient; Philosophers, in general, the second.

The poet, says Schiller, is a citizen not only of his country, but of his time. Whatever occupies and interests men in general, will interest him still more. That nameless Unrest, the blind struggle of a soul in bondage, that high, sad, longing Discontent, which was agitating every bosom, had driven Goethe almost to despair. All felt it; he alone could give it voice. And here lies the secret of his popularity; in his deep, susceptive heart, he felt a thousand times more keenly what every one was feeling; with the creative gift which belonged to him as a poet, he bodied it forth into visible shape, gave it a local habitation and a name; and so made himself the spokesman of his generation. *Werter* is but the cry of

that dim, rooted pain, under which all thoughtful men of a certain age were languishing: it paints the misery, it passionately utters the complaint; and heart and voice, all over Europe, loudly and at once respond to it. True, it prescribes no remedy; for that was a far different, far harder enterprise, to which other years and a higher culture were required; but even this utterance of the pain, even this little, for the present, is ardently grasped at, and with eager sympathy appropriated in every bosom. If Byron's life-weariness, his moody melancholy, and mad stormful indignation, borne on the tones of a wild and quite artless melody, could pierce so deep into many a British heart, now that the whole matter is no longer new,—is indeed old and trite,—we may judge with what vehement acceptance this *Werter* must have been welcomed, coming as it did like a voice from unknown regions; the first thrilling peal of that impassioned dirge, which, in country after country, men's ears have listened to, till they were deaf to all else. For *Werter* infusing itself into the core and whole spirit of Literature, gave birth to a race of Sentimentalists, who have raged aud wailed in every part of the world; till better light dawned on them, or at worst, exhausted Nature laid herself to sleep, and it was discovered that lamenting was an unproductive labour. These funereal choristers, in Germany a loud, haggard, tumultuous, as well as tearful class, were named the *Kraftmänner*, or Power-men; but have all long since, like sick children, cried themselves to rest. Byron was our English Sentimentalist and Power-man; the strongest of his kind in Europe; the wildest, the gloomiest, and it may be hoped the last. For what good is it to 'whine, put finger i' the eye, and sob,' in such a case? Still more, to snarl and snap in malignant wise, 'like dog distract, or monkey sick?' Why should we quarrel with our existence, here as it lies before us, our field and inheritance, to make or to mar, for better or for worse; in which, too, so many noblest men have, ever from the beginning, warring with the very evils we war with, both made and been what will be venerated to all time?

What shapest thou here at the World ? 'Tis shapen long ago ;
The Maker shaped it, *he* thought it best even *so*.
Thy lot is appointed, go follow its hest ;
Thy journey's begun, thou must move and not rest ;
For sorrow and care cannot alter thy case,
And running, not raging, will win thee the race.

Meanwhile, of the philosophy which reigns in *Werter*, and which it has been our lot to hear so often repeated elsewhere, we may here produce a short specimen. The following passage will serve our turn ; and be, if we mistake not, new to the mere English reader :

'That the life of man is but a dream, has come into many a head ; and with me, too, some feeling of that sort is ever at work. When I look upon the limits within which man's powers of action and inquiry are hemmed in ; when I see how all effort issues simply in procuring supply for wants, which again have no object but continuing this poor existence of ours ; and then, that all satisfaction on certain points of inquiry is but a dreaming resignation, while you paint, with many-coloured figures and gay prospects, the walls you sit imprisoned by,—all this, Wilhelm, makes me dumb. I return to my own heart, and find there such a world ! Yet a world, too, more in forecast and dim desire, than in vision and living power. And then all swims before my mind's eye, and so I smile, and again go dreaming on as others do.

'That children know not what they want, all conscientious tutors and education-philosophers have long been agreed : but that full-grown men, as well as children, stagger to and fro along this earth ; like these, not knowing whence they come or whither they go ; aiming, just as little, after true objects ; governed just as well by biscuit, cakes and birchrods : this is what no one likes to believe ; and yet it seems to me, the fact is lying under our very nose.

'I will confess to thee, for I know what thou wouldst say to me on this point, that those are the happiest, who, like children, live from one day to the other, carrying their dolls about with them, to dress and undress ; gliding also, with the highest respect, before the drawer where mamma has locked the gingerbread ; and, when they do get the wished-for morsel, devouring it with puffed-out cheeks, and crying, More !— These are the fortunate of the earth. Well is it likewise with

those who can label their rag-gathering employments, or perhaps their passions, with pompous titles, and represent them to mankind as gigantic undertakings for its welfare and salvation. Happy the man who can live in such wise! But he who, in his humility, observes where all this issues, who sees how featly any small thriving citizen can trim his patch of garden into a Paradise, and with what unbroken heart even the unhappy crawls along under his burden, and all are alike ardent to see the light of this sun but one minute longer;—yes, he is silent, and he too forms his world out of himself, and he too is happy because he is a man. And then, hemmed-in as he is, he ever keeps in his heart the sweet feeling of freedom, and that this dungeon—can be left when he likes.'[1]

What Goethe's own temper and habit of thought must have been, while the materials of such a work were forming themselves within his heart, might be in some degree conjectured, and he has himself informed us. We quote the following passage from his *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. The writing of *Werter*, it would seem, indicating so gloomy, almost desperate a state of mind in the author, was at the same time a symptom, indeed a cause, of his now having got delivered from such melancholy. Far from recommending suicide to others, as *Werter* has often been accused of doing, it was the first proof that Goethe himself had abandoned these 'hypochondriacal crotchets:' the imaginary 'Sorrows' had helped to free him from many real ones.

'Such weariness of life,' he says, 'has its physical and its spiritual causes; those we shall leave to the Doctor, these to the Moralist, for investigation; and in this so trite matter, touch only on the main point, where that phenomenon expresses itself most distinctly. All pleasure in life is founded on the regular return of external things. The alternations of day and night, of the seasons, of the blossoms and fruits, and whatever else meets us from epoch to epoch with the offer and command of enjoyment,—these are the essential springs of earthly existence. The more open we are to such enjoyments, the happier we feel ourselves; but, should the vicissitude of these appearances come and go without our taking interest in

[1] *Leiden des jungen Werther. Am 22 May.*

it; should such benignant invitations address themselves to us in vain, then follows the greatest misery, the heaviest malady; one grows to view life as a sickening burden. We have heard of the Englishman who hanged himself, to be no more troubled with daily putting off and on his clothes. I knew an honest gardener, the overseer of some extensive pleasure-grounds, who once splenetically exclaimed: Shall I see these clouds forever passing, then, from east to west? It is told of one of our most distinguished men,[1] that he viewed with dissatisfaction the spring again growing green, and wished that, by way of change, it would for once be red. These are specially the symptoms of life-weariness, which not seldom issues in suicide, and, at this time, among men of meditative, secluded character, was more frequent than might be supposed.

'Nothing, however, will sooner induce this feeling of satiety than the return of love. The first love, it is said justly, is the only one; for in the second, and by the second, the highest significance of love is in fact lost. That idea of infinitude, of everlasting endurance, which supports and bears it aloft, is destroyed: it seems transient, like all that returns. * * *

'Farther, a young man soon comes to find, if not in himself, at least in others, that moral epochs have their course, as well as the seasons. The favour of the great, the protection of the powerful, the help of the active, the good-will of the many, the love of the few, all fluctuates up and down; so that we cannot hold it fast, any more than we can hold sun, moon and stars. And yet these things are not mere natural events: such blessings flee away from us, by our own blame or that of others, by accident or destiny; but they do flee away, they fluctuate, and we are never sure of them.

'But what most pains the young man of sensibility is, the incessant return of our faults: for how long is it before we learn, that, in cultivating our virtues, we nourish our faults along with them! The former rest on the latter, as on their roots; and these ramify themselves in secret as strongly and as wide, as those others in the open light. Now, as we for most part practise our virtues with forethought and will, but by our faults are overtaken unexpectedly, the former seldom gives us much joy, the latter are continually giving us sorrow and distress. Indeed, here lies the subtlest difficulty in Self-knowledge, the difficulty which almost renders it impossible.

[1] Lessing, we believe: but perhaps it was less the greenness of spring that vexed him, than Jacobi's too lyrical admiration of it.—Ed.

But figure, in addition to all this, the heat of youthful blood, an imagination easily fascinated and paralysed by individual objects; farther, the wavering commotions of the day; and you will find that an impatient striving to free oneself from such a pressure was no unnatural state.

'However, these gloomy contemplations, which, if a man yield to them, will lead him to boundless lengths, could not have so decidedly developed themselves in our young German minds, had not some outward cause excited and forwarded us in this sorrowful employment. Such a cause existed for us in the Literature, especially the Poetical Literature, of England, the great qualities of which are accompanied by a certain earnest melancholy, which it imparts to every one that occupies himself with it.

* * * * *

'In such an element, with such an environment of circumstances, with studies and tastes of this sort; harassed by unsatisfied desires, externally nowhere called forth to important action; with the sole prospect of dragging on a languid, spiritless, mere civic life,—we had recurred, in our disconsolate pride, to the thought that life, when it no longer suited one, might be cast aside at pleasure; and had helped ourselves hereby, stintedly enough, over the crosses and tediums of the time. These sentiments were so universal, that *Werter*, on this very account, could produce the greatest effect; striking-in everywhere with the dominant humour, and representing the interior of a sickly youthful heart, in a visible and palpable shape. How accurately the English have known this sorrow, might be seen from these few significant lines, written before the appearance of *Werter:*

> To griefs congenial prone,
> More wounds than nature gave he knew,
> While misery's form his fancy drew
> In dark ideal hues, and horrors not its own.[1]

'Self-murder is an occurrence in men's affairs which, how much soever it may have already been discussed and commented upon, excites an interest in every mortal; and, at every new era, must be discussed again. Montesquieu confers on his heroes and great men the right of putting themselves to death when they see good; observing, that it must

[1] So in the original.

stand at the will of every one to conclude the Fifth Act of his Tragedy whenever he thinks best. Here, however, our business lies not with persons who, in activity, have led an important life, who have spent their days for some mighty empire, or for the cause of freedom; and whom one may forbear to censure, when, seeing the high ideal purpose which had inspired them vanish from the earth, they meditate pursuing it to that other undiscovered country. Our business here is with persons to whom, properly from want of activity, and in the peacefullest condition imaginable, life has nevertheless, by their exorbitant requisitions on themselves, become a burden. As I myself was in this predicament, and know best what pain I suffered in it, what efforts it cost me to escape from it, I shall not hide the speculations I, from time to time, considerately prosecuted, as to the various modes of death one had to choose from.

'It is something so unnatural for a man to break loose from himself, not only to hurt, but to annihilate himself, that he for the most part catches at means of a mechanical sort for putting his purpose in execution. When Ajax falls on his sword, it is the weight of his body that performs this service for him. When the warrior adjures his armour-bearer to slay him, rather than that he come into the hands of the enemy, this is likewise an external force which he secures for himself; only a moral instead of a physical one. Women seek in the water a cooling for their desperation; and the highly mechanical means of pistol-shooting insures a quick act with the smallest effort. Hanging is a death one mentions unwillingly, because it is an ignoble one. In England it may happen more readily than elsewhere, because from youth upwards you there see that punishment frequent without being specially ignominious. By poison, by opening of veins, men aim but at parting slowly from life; and the most refined, the speediest, the most painless death, by means of an asp, was worthy of a Queen, who had spent her life in pomp and luxurious pleasure. All these, however, are external helps; are enemies, with which a man, that he may fight against himself, makes league.

'When I considered these various methods, and farther, looked abroad over history, I could find among all suicides no one that had gone about this deed with such greatness and freedom of spirit as the Emperor Otho. This man, beaten indeed as a general, yet nowise reduced to extremities, determines, for the good of the Empire, which already in some

measure belonged to him, and for the saving of so many thousands, to leave the world. With his friends he passes a gay festive night, and next morning it is found that with his own hand he has plunged a sharp dagger into his heart. This sole act seemed to me worthy of imitation; and I convinced myself that whoever could not proceed herein as Otho had done, was not entitled to resolve on renouncing life. By this conviction, I saved myself from the purpose, or indeed more properly speaking, from the whim, of suicide, which in those fair peaceful times had insinuated itself into the mind of indolent youth. Among a considerable collection of arms, I possessed a costly, well-ground dagger. This I laid down nightly beside my bed; and before extinguishing the light, I tried whether I could succeed in sending the sharp point an inch or two deep into my breast. But as I truly never could succeed, I at last took to laughing at myself; threw away all these hypochondriacal crotchets, and determined to live. To do this with cheerfulness, however, I required to have some poetical task given me, wherein all that I had felt, thought or dreamed on this weighty business might be spoken forth. With such view, I endeavoured to collect the elements which for a year or two had been floating about in me; I represented to myself the circumstances which had most oppressed and afflicted me: but nothing of all this would take form; there was wanting an incident, a fable, in which I might embody it.

'All at once I hear tidings of Jerusalem's death; and directly following the general rumour, came the most precise and circumstantial description of the business; and in this instant the plan of *Werter* was invented: the whole shot together from all sides, and became a solid mass; as the water in the vessel, which already stood on the point of freezing, is by the slightest motion changed at once into firm ice."[1]

A wide and everyway most important interval divides *Werter*, with its sceptical philosophy and 'hypochondriacal crotchets,' from Goethe's next Novel, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, published some twenty years afterwards. This work belongs, in all senses, to the second and sounder period of Goethe's life, and may indeed serve as the fullest, if perhaps not the purest, impress of it; being written with due fore-

[1] *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, b. iii. s. 200–213.

thought, at various times, during a period of no less than ten years. Considered as a piece of Art, there were much to be said on *Meister;* all which, however, lies beyond our present purpose. We are here looking at the work chiefly as a document for the writer's history; and in this point of view, it certainly seems, as contrasted with its more popular precursor, to deserve our best attention: for the problem which had been stated in *Werter*, with despair of its solution, is here solved. The lofty enthusiasm, which, wandering wildly over the universe, found no resting-place, has here reached its appointed home; and lives in harmony with what long appeared to threaten it with annihilation. Anarchy has now become Peace; the once gloomy and perturbed spirit is now serene, cheerfully vigorous, and rich in good fruits. Neither, which is most important of all, has this Peace been attained by a surrender to Necessity, or any compact with Delusion; a seeming blessing, such as years and dispiritment will of themselves bring to most men, and which is indeed no blessing, since even continued battle is better than destruction or captivity; and peace of this sort is like that of Galgacus's Romans, who 'called it peace when they had made a desert.' Here the ardent high-aspiring youth has grown into the calmest man, yet with increase and not loss of ardour, and with aspirations higher as well as clearer. For he has conquered his unbelief; the Ideal has been built on the Actual; no longer floats vaguely in darkness and regions of dreams, but rests in light, on the firm ground of human interest and business, as in its true scene, on its true basis.

It is wonderful to see with what softness the scepticism of Jarno, the commercial spirit of Werner, the reposing polished manhood of Lothario and the Uncle, the unearthly enthusiasm of the Harper, the gay animal vivacity of Philina, the mystic, ethereal, almost spiritual nature of Mignon, are blended together in this work; how justice is done to each, how each lives freely in his proper element, in his proper form; and how, as Wilhelm himself, the mild-hearted, all-hoping, all-believing Wilhelm, struggles forward towards his world of Art through these curiously complected influences, all this unites

itself into a multifarious, yet so harmonious Whole; as into a clear poetic mirror, where man's life and business in this age, his passions and purposes, the highest equally with the lowest, are imaged back to us in beautiful significance. Poetry and Prose are no longer at variance; for the poet's eyes are opened: he sees the changes of many-coloured existence, and sees the loveliness and deep purport which lies hidden under the very meanest of them; hidden to the vulgar sight, but clear to the poet's; because the 'open secret' is no longer a secret to him, and he knows that the Universe is *full* of goodness; that whatever has being has beauty.

Apart from its literary merits or demerits, such is the temper of mind we trace in Goethe's *Meister*, and, more or less expressly exhibited, in all his later works. We reckon it a rare phenomenon, this temper; and worthy, in our times, if it do exist, of best study from all inquiring men. How has such a temper been attained in this so lofty and impetuous mind, once too, dark, desolate and full of doubt, more than any other? How may we, each of us in his several sphere, attain it, or strengthen it, for ourselves? These are questions, this last is a question, in which no one is unconcerned.

To answer these questions, to begin the answer of them, would lead us very far beyond our present limits. It is not, as we believe, without long, sedulous study, without learning much and unlearning much, that, for any man, the answer of such questions is even to be hoped. Meanwhile, as regards Goethe, there is one feature of the business, which, to us, throws considerable light on his moral persuasions, and will not, in investigating the secret of them, be overlooked. We allude to the spirit in which he cultivates his Art; the noble, disinterested, almost religious love with which he looks on Art in general, and strives towards it as towards the sure, highest, nay only good. We extract one passage from *Wilhelm Meister:* it may pass for a piece of fine declamation, but not in that light do we offer it here. Strange, unaccountable as the thing may seem, we have actually evidence before our mind that Goethe believes in such doctrines, nay has in some sort lived and endeavoured to direct his conduct by them.

'"Look at men," continues Wilhelm, "how they struggle after happiness and satisfaction! Their wishes, their toil, their gold, are ever hunting restlessly; and after what? After that which the Poet has received from nature; the right enjoyment of the world; the feeling of himself in others; the harmonious conjunction of many things that will seldom go together.

'"What is it that keeps men in continual discontent and agitation? It is that they cannot make realities correspond with their conceptions, that enjoyment steals away from among their hands, that the wished-for comes too late, and nothing reached and acquired produces on the heart the effect which their longing for it at a distance led them to anticipate. Now fate has exalted the Poet above all this, as if he were a god. He views the conflicting tumult of the passions; sees families and kingdoms raging in aimless commotion; sees those perplexed enigmas of misunderstanding, which often a single syllable would explain, occasioning convulsions unutterably baleful. He has a fellow-feeling of the mournful and the joyful in the fate of all mortals. When the man of the world is devoting his days to wasting melancholy for some deep disappointment; or, in the ebullience of joy, is going out to meet his happy destiny, the lightly-moved and all-conceiving spirit of the Poet steps forth, like the sun from night to day, and with soft transition tunes his harp to joy or woe. From his heart, its native soil, springs the fair flower of Wisdom; and if others while waking dream, and are pained with fantastic delusions from their every sense, he passes the dream of life like one awake, and the strangest event is to him nothing, save a part of the past and of the future. And thus the Poet is a teacher, a prophet, a friend of gods and men. How! Thou wouldst have him descend from his height to some paltry occupation? He who is fashioned like a bird, to hover round the world, to nestle on the lofty summits, to feed on flowers and fruits, exchanging gaily one bough for another, *he* ought also to work at the plough like an ox; like a dog to train himself to the harness and draught; or perhaps, tied up in a chain, to guard a farm-yard by his barking?"

'Werner, it may well be supposed, had listened with the greatest surprise. "All true," he rejoined, "if men were but made like birds; and, though they neither span nor weaved, could spend peaceful days in perpetual enjoyment, if, at the approach of winter, they could as easily betake themselves to distant regions; could retire before scarcity, and fortify themselves against frost."

'"Poets have lived so," exclaimed Wilhelm, "in times when true nobleness was better reverenced; and so should they ever live. Sufficiently provided for within, they had need of little from without; the gift of imparting lofty emotions, and glorious images to men, in melodies and words that charmed the ear, and fixed themselves inseparably on whatever they might touch, of old enraptured the world, and served the gifted as a rich inheritance. At the courts of kings, at the tables of the great, under the windows of the fair, the sound of them was heard, while the ear and the soul were shut for all beside; and men felt, as we do when delight comes over us, and we pause with rapture if, among the dingles we are crossing, the voice of the nightingale starts out, touching and strong. They found a home in every habitation of the world, and the lowliness of their condition but exalted them the more. The hero listened to their songs, and the Conqueror of the Earth did reverence to a Poet; for he felt that, without poets, his own wild and vast existence would pass away like a whirlwind, and be forgotten forever. The lover wished that he could feel his longings and joys so variedly and so harmoniously as the Poet's inspired lips had skill to show them forth; and even the rich man could not of himself discern such costliness in his idol grandeurs, as when they were presented to him shining in the splendour of the Poet's spirit, sensible to all worth, and ennobling all. Nay, if thou wilt have it, who but the Poet was it that first formed Gods for us; that exalted us to them, and brought them down to us?"'[1]

For a man of Goethe's talent to write many such pieces of rhetoric, setting forth the dignity of poets, and their innate independence on external circumstances, could be no very hard task; accordingly, we find such sentiments again and again expressed, sometimes with still more gracefulness, still clearer emphasis, in his various writings. But to adopt these sentiments into his sober practical persuasion; in any measure to feel and believe that such was still, and must always be, the high vocation of the poet; on this ground of universal humanity, of ancient and now almost forgotten nobleness, to take his stand, even in these trivial, jeering, withered, unbelieving days; and through all their complex, dispiriting,

[1] *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, book ii. chap. 2.

mean, yet tumultuous influences, to 'make his light shine before men,' that it might beautify even our 'rag-gathering age' with some beams of that mild, divine splendour, which had long left us, the very possibility of which was denied; heartily and in earnest to meditate all this, was no common proceeding; to bring it into practice, especially in such a life as his has been, was among the highest and hardest enterprises which any man whatever could engage in. We reckon this a greater novelty, than all the novelties which as a mere writer he ever put forth, whether for praise or censure. We have taken it upon us to say that if such *is*, in any sense, the state of the case with regard to Goethe, he deserves not mere approval as a pleasing poet and sweet singer; but deep, grateful study, observance, imitation, as a Moralist and Philosopher. If there be any *probability* that such is the state of the case, we cannot but reckon it a matter well worthy of being inquired into. And it is for this only that we are here pleading and arguing.

On the literary merit and meaning of *Wilhelm Meister* we have already said that we must not enter at present. The book has been translated into English: it underwent the usual judgment from our Reviews and Magazines; was to some a stone of stumbling, to others foolishness, to most an object of wonder. On the whole, it passed smoothly through the critical Assaying-house; for the Assayers have Christian dispositions, and very little time; so *Meister* was ranked, without umbrage, among the legal coin of the Minerva Press; and allowed to circulate as copper currency among the rest. That in so quick a process, a German *Friedrich d'or* might not slip through unnoticed among new and equally brilliant British brass Farthings, there is no warranting. For our critics can now criticise *impromptu*, which, though far the readiest, is nowise the surest plan. *Meister* is the mature product of the first genius of our times; and must, one would think, be different, in various respects, from the immature products of geniuses who are far from the first, and whose works spring from the brain in as many weeks as Goethe's cost him years.

Nevertheless, we quarrel with no man's verdict; for Time, which tries all things, will try this also, and bring to light the truth, both as regards criticism and thing criticised; or sink both into final darkness, which likewise will be the truth as regards them. But there is one censure which we must advert to for a moment, so singular does it seem to us. *Meister*, it appears, is a 'vulgar' work; no 'gentleman,' we hear in certain circles, could have written it; few real gentlemen, it is insinuated, can like to read it; no real lady, unless possessed of considerable courage, should profess having read it at all. Of Goethe's 'gentility' we shall leave all men to speak that have any, even the faintest knowledge of him; and with regard to the gentility of his readers, state only the following fact. Most of us have heard of the late Queen of Prussia, and know whether or not she was genteel enough, and of real ladyhood: nay, if we must prove everything, her character can be read in the *Life of Napoleon*, by Sir Walter Scott, who passes for a judge of those matters. And yet this is what we find written in the *Kunst und Alterthum* for 1824:[1]

'Books too have their past happiness, which no chance can take away:

> *Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass,*
> *Wer nicht die kummervollen Nächte*
> *Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,*
> *Der kennt euch nicht, ihr himmlischen Mächte.*[2]

'These heart-broken lines a highly noble-minded, venerated Queen repeated in the cruellest exile, when cast forth to boundless misery. She made herself familiar with the Book in which these words, with many other painful experiences, are communicated, and drew from it a melancholy consolation.

[1] Band, v s. 8.

[2] Who never ate his bread in sorrow,
Who never spent the darksome hours
Weeping and watching for the morrow,
He knows you not, ye unseen Powers.
Wilhelm Meister, book ii. chap. 13.

This influence, stretching of itself into boundless time, what is there that can obliterate?'

Here are strange diversities of taste; 'national discrepancies' enough, had we time to investigate them! Nevertheless, wishing each party to retain his own special persuasions, so far as they are honest, and adapted to his intellectual position, national or individual, we cannot but believe that there is an inward and essential Truth in Art; a Truth far deeper than the dictates of mere Mode, and which, could we pierce through these dictates, would be true for all nations and all men. To arrive at this Truth, distant from every one at first, approachable by most, attainable by some small number, is the end and aim of all real study of Poetry. For such a purpose, among others, the comparison of English with foreign judgment, on works that will bear judging, forms no unprofitable help. Some day, we may translate Friedrich Schlegel's Essay on *Meister*, by way of contrast to our English animadversions on that subject. Schlegel's praise, whatever ours might do, rises sufficiently high: neither does he seem, during twenty years, to have repented of what he said; for we observe in the edition of his works, at present publishing, he repeats the whole *Character*, and even appends to it, in a separate sketch, some new assurances and elucidations.

It may deserve to be mentioned here that *Meister*, at its first appearance in Germany, was received very much as it has been in England. Goethe's known character, indeed, precluded indifference there; but otherwise it was much the same. The whole guild of criticism was thrown into perplexity, into sorrow; everywhere was dissatisfaction open or concealed. Official duty impelling them to speak, some said one thing, some another; all felt in secret that they knew not what to say. Till the appearance of Schlegel's *Character*, no word, that we have seen, of the smallest chance to be decisive, or indeed to last beyond the day, had been uttered regarding it. Some regretted that the fire of *Werter* was so wonderfully abated; whisperings there might be about 'lowness,' 'heavi-

ness;' some spake forth boldly in behalf of suffering 'virtue.' Novalis was not among the speakers, but he censured the work in secret, and this for a reason which to us will seem the strangest; for its being, as we should say, a Benthamite work! Many are the bitter aphorisms we find, among his Fragments, directed against *Meister*, for its prosaic, mechanical, economical, coldhearted, altogether Utilitarian character. We English again call Goethe a mystic; so difficult is it to please all parties! But the good, deep, noble Novalis made the fairest amends; for notwithstanding all this, Tieck tells us, if we remember rightly, he continually returned to *Meister*, and could not but peruse and reperuse it.

On a somewhat different ground proceeded quite another sort of assault from one Pustkucher of Quedlinburg. Herr Pustkucher felt afflicted, it would seem, at the want of Patriotism and Religion too manifest in *Meister;* and determined to take what vengeance he could. By way of sequel to the *Apprenticeship*, Goethe had announced his *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre*,[1] as in a state of preparation; but the book still lingered: whereupon, in the interim, forth comes this Pustkucher with a Pseudo-*Wanderjahre* of his own; satirising, according to ability, the spirit and principles of the *Apprenticeship*. We have seen an epigram on Pustkucher and his *Wanderjahre*, attributed, with what justice we know not, to Goethe himself: whether it is his or not, it is written in his name; and seems to express accurately enough for such a purpose the relation between the parties,—in language which we had rather not translate:

Will denn von Quedlinburg aus
Ein neuer Wanderer trauben?
Hat doch die Wallfisch seine Laus,
Muss auch die meine haben.

So much for Pustkucher, and the rest. The true *Wanderjahre* has at length appeared: the first volume has been before

[1] '*Wanderjahre* denotes the period which a German artisan is, by 'law or usage, obliged to pass in travelling, to perfect himself in his 'craft, after the conclusion of his *Lehrjahre* (Apprenticeship), and be-

the world since 1821. This Fragment, for it still continues such, is in our view one of the most perfect pieces of composition that Goethe has ever produced. We have heard something of his being at present engaged in extending or completing it: what the whole may in his hands become, we are anxious to see; but the *Wanderjahre*, even in its actual state, can hardly be called unfinished, as a piece of writing; it coheres so beautifully within itself; and yet we see not whence the wondrous landscape came, or whither it is stretching; but it hangs before us as a fairy region, hiding its borders on this side in light sunny clouds, fading away on that into the infinite azure: already, we might almost say, it gives us the notion of a *completed fragment*, or the state in which a fragment, not meant for completion, might be left.

But apart from its environment, and considered merely in itself, this *Wanderjahre* seems to us a most estimable work, There is, in truth, a singular gracefulness in it; a high, melodious Wisdom; so light is it, yet so earnest; so calm, so gay, yet so strong and deep: for the purest spirit of all Art rests over it and breathes through it; 'mild Wisdom is wedded in living union to Harmony divine;' the Thought of the Sage is melted, we might say, and incorporated in the liquid music of the Poet. 'It is called a Romance,' observes the English Translator: 'but it treats not of romance characters or sub-'jects; it has less relation to Fielding's *Tom Jones*, than to 'Spenser's *Faëry Queen*.' We have not forgotten what is due to Spenser; yet, perhaps, beside his immortal allegory this *Wanderjahre* may, in fact, not unfairly be named; and with this advantage, that it is an allegory not of the Seventeenth century, but of the Nineteenth; a picture full of expressiveness, of what men are striving for, and ought to strive for, in

'fore his Mastership can begin. In many guilds this custom is as old 'as their existence, and continues still to be indispensable: it is said to 'have originated in the frequent journeys of the German Emperors to 'Italy, and the consequent improvement observed in such workmen 'among their menials as had attended them thither. Most of the guilds 'are what is called *geschenkten*, that is, *presenting*, having presents to 'give to needy *wandering* brothers.'

these actual days. 'The scene,' we are further told, 'is not 'laid on this firm earth; but in a fair Utopia of Art and Science 'and free Activity; the figures, light and aëriform, come un-'looked for, and melt away abruptly, like the pageants of 'Prospero, in his Enchanted Island.' We venture to add, that, like Prospero's Island, this too is drawn from the inward depths, the purest sphere of poetic inspiration: ever, as we read it, the images of old Italian Art flit before us; the gay tints of Titian; the quaint grace of Domenichino; sometimes the clear yet unfathomable depth of Rafaelle; and whatever else we have known or dreamed of in that rich old genial world.

As it is Goethe's moral sentiments, and culture as a man, that we have made our chief object in this survey, we would fain give some adequate specimen of the *Wanderjahre*, where, as appears to us, these are to be traced in their last degree of clearness and completeness. But to do this, to find a specimen that should be adequate, were difficult, or rather impossible. How shall we divide what is in itself one and indivisible? How shall the fraction of a complex picture give us any idea of the so beautiful whole? Nevertheless, we shall refer our readers to the Tenth and Eleventh Chapters of the *Wanderjahre;* where, in poetic and symbolic style, they will find a sketch of the nature, objects and present ground of Religious Belief, which, if they have ever reflected duly on that matter, will hardly fail to interest them. They will find these chapters, if we mistake not, worthy of deep consideration; for this is the merit of Goethe: his maxims will bear study; nay they require it, and improve by it more and more. They come from the depths of his mind, and are not in their place till they have reached the depths of ours. The wisest man, we believe, may see in them a reflex of his own wisdom: but to him who is still learning, they become as seeds of knowledge; they take root in the mind, and ramify, as we meditate them, into a whole garden of thought. The sketch we mentioned is far too long for being extracted here: however, we give some scattered portions of it, which the reader will accept with fair allowance. As the wild suicidal Night-thoughts

of *Werter* formed our first extract, this by way of counterpart may be the last. We must fancy Wilhelm in the 'Pedagogic province,' proceeding towards the 'CHIEF, or the THREE,' with intent to place his son under their charge, in that wonderful region, 'where he was to see so many singularities.'

'Wilhelm had already noticed that in the cut and colour of the young people's clothes a variety prevailed, which gave the whole tiny population a peculiar aspect: he was about to question his attendant on this point, when a still stranger observation forced itself upon him: all the children, how employed soever, laid down their work, and turned, with singular yet diverse gestures, towards the party riding past them; or rather, as it was easy to infer, towards the Overseer, who was in it. The youngest laid their arms crosswise over their breasts, and looked cheerfully up to the sky; those of middle size held their hands on their backs, and looked smiling on the ground; the eldest stood with a frank and spirited air,—their arms stretched down, they turned their heads to the right, and formed themselves into a line; whereas the others kept separate, each where he chanced to be.

'The riders having stopped and dismounted here, as several children, in their various modes, were standing forth to be inspected by the Overseer, Wilhelm asked the meaning of these gestures; but Felix struck-in and cried gaily: "What posture am I to take then?" "Without doubt," said the Overseer, "the first posture: the arms over the breast, the face earnest and cheerful towards the sky," Felix obeyed, but soon cried: "This is not much to my taste; I see nothing up there: does it last long? But yes!" exclaimed he joyfully, "yonder are a pair of falcons flying from the west to the east: that is a good sign too?"—"As thou takest it, as thou behavest," said the other: "Now mingle among them as they mingle." He gave a signal, and the children left their postures, and again betook them to work or sport as before.'

Wilhelm a second time 'asks the meaning of these gestures;' but the Overseer is not at liberty to throw much light on the matter; mentions only that they are symbolical, 'nowise mere grimaces, but have a moral purport, which per-'haps the CHIEF, or the THREE may farther explain to him.' The children themselves, it would seem, only know it in part;

'secrecy having many advantages; for when you tell a man at 'once and straightforward the purpose of any object, he fan- 'cies there is nothing in it.' By and by, however, having left Felix by the way, and parted with the Overseer, Wilhelm arrives at the abode of the Three 'who preside over sacred things,' and from whom farther satisfaction is to be looked for.

'Wilhelm had now reached the gate of a wooded vale, surrounded with high walls: on a certain sign, the little door opened, and a man of earnest, imposing look received our Traveller. The latter found himself in a large beautifully umbrageous space, decked with the richest foliage, shaded with trees and bushes of all sorts; while stately walls and magnificent buildings were discerned only in glimpses through this thick natural boscage. A friendly reception from the Three, who by and by appeared, at last turned into a general conversation, the substance of which we now present in an abbreviated shape.

'"Since you entrust your son to us," said they, "it is fair that we admit you to a closer view of our procedure. Of what is external you have seen much that does not bear its meaning on its front. What part of this do you wish to have explained?"

'"Dignified yet singular gestures of salutation I have noticed; the import of which I would gladly learn: with you, doubtless, the exterior has a reference to the interior, and inversely; let me know what this reference is."

'"Well-formed healthy children," replied the Three, "bring much into the world along with them; Nature has given to each whatever he requires for time and duration; to unfold this is our duty; often it unfolds itself better of its own accord. One thing there is, however, which no child brings into the world with him; and yet it is on this one thing that all depends for making man in every point a man. If you can discover it yourself, speak it out." Wilhelm thought a little while, then shook his head.

'The Three, after a suitable pause, exclaimed, "Reverence!" Wilhelm seemed to hesitate. "Reverence!" cried they, a second time. "All want it, perhaps yourself."

'"Three kinds of gestures you have seen; and we inculcate a threefold reverence, which when commingled and formed into one whole, attains its full force and effect. The first is Reverence for what is Above us. That posture, the arms

crossed over the breast, the look turned joyfully towards heaven; that is what we have enjoined on young children; requiring from them thereby a testimony that there is a God above, who images and reveals himself in parents, teachers, superiors. Then comes the second; Reverence for what is Under us. Those hands folded over the back, and as it were tied together; that down-turned smiling look, announce that we are to regard the earth with attention and cheerfulness: from the bounty of the earth we are nourished; the earth affords unutterable joys; but disproportionate sorrows she also brings us. Should one of our children do himself external hurt, blamably or blamelessly; should others hurt him accidentally or purposely; should dead involuntary matter do him hurt; then let him well consider it; for such dangers will attend him all his days. But from this posture we delay not to free our pupil, the instant we become convinced that the instruction connected with it has produced sufficient influence on him. Then, on the contrary, we bid him gather courage, and, turning to his comrades, range himself along with them. Now, at last, he stands forth, frank and bold; not selfishly isolated; only in combination with his equals does he front the world. Farther we have nothing to add."

'"I see a glimpse of it!" said Wilhelm. "Are not the mass of men so marred and stinted, because they take pleasure only in the element of evil-wishing and evil-speaking? Whoever gives himself to this, soon comes to be indifferent towards God, contemptuous towards the world, spiteful towards his equals; and the true, genuine, indispensable sentiment of self-estimation corrupts into self-conceit and presumption. Allow me, however," continued he, "to state one difficulty. You say that reverence is not natural to man: now has not the reverence or fear of rude people for violent convulsions of nature, or other inexplicable mysteriously foreboding occurrences, been heretofore regarded as the germ out of which a higher feeling, a purer sentiment, was by degrees to be developed?"

'"Nature is indeed adequate to fear," replied they, "but to reverence not adequate. Men fear a known or unknown powerful being; the strong seeks to conquer it, the weak to avoid it; both endeavour to get quit of it, and feel themselves happy when for a short season they have put it aside, and their nature has in some degree restored itself to freedom and independence. The natural man repeats this operation millions of times in the course of his life; from fear he struggles to freedom; from freedom he is driven back to fear, and so makes

no advancement. To fear is easy, but grievous; to reverence is difficult, but satisfactory. Man does not willingly submit himself to reverence, or rather he never so submits himself: it is a higher sense which must be communicated to his nature; which only in some favoured individuals unfolds itself spontaneously, who on this account too have of old been looked upon as Saints and Gods. Here lies the worth, here lies the business of all true Religions, whereof there are likewise only three, according to the objects towards which they direct our devotion."

'The men paused; Wilhelm reflected for a time in silence; but feeling in himself no pretension to unfold these strange words, he requested the Sages to proceed with their exposition. They immediately complied. "No Religion that grounds itself on fear," said they, "is regarded among us. With the reverence to which a man should give dominion in his mind, he can, in paying honour, keep his own honour; he is not disunited with himself as in the former case. The Religion which depends on Reverence for what is Above us, we denominate the Ethnic; it is the Religion of the Nations, and the first happy deliverance from a degrading fear: all Heathen religions, as we call them, are of this sort, whatsoever names they may bear. The Second Religion, which founds itself on Reverence for what is Around us, we denominate the Philosophical; for the Philosopher stations himself in the middle, and must draw down to him all that is higher, and up to him all that is lower, and only in this medium condition does he merit the title of Wise. Here as he surveys with clear sight his relation to his equals, and therefore to the whole human race, his relation likewise to all other earthly circumstances and arrangements necessary or accidental, he alone, in a cosmic sense, lives in Truth. But now we have to speak of the Third Religion, grounded on Reverence for what is Under us: this we name the Christian; as in the Christian Religion such a temper is the most distinctly manifested: it is a last step to which mankind were fitted and destined to attain. But what a task was it, not only to be patient with the Earth, and let it lie beneath us, we appealing to a higher birthplace; but also to recognise humility and poverty, mockery and despite, disgrace and wretchedness, suffering and death, to recognise these things as divine; nay, even on sin and crime to look not as hindrances, but to honour and love them as furtherances, of what is holy. Of this, indeed, we find some traces in all ages: but the trace is not the goal; and this being now

attained, the human species cannot retrograde ; and we may say that the Christian Religion, having once appeared, cannot again vanish ; having once assumed its divine shape, can be subject to no dissolution."

'"To which of these Religions do you specially adhere?" inquired Wilhelm.

'"To all the three," replied they, "for in their union they produce what may properly be called the true Religion. Out of those three Reverences springs the highest Reverence, Reverence for Oneself, and these again unfold themselves from this ; so that man attains the highest elevation of which he is capable, that of being justified in reckoning himself the Best that God and Nature have produced ; nay, of being able to continue on this lofty eminence, without being again by self-conceit and presumption drawn down from it into the vulgar level."'

The Three undertake to admit him into the interior of their Sanctuary ; whither, accordingly, he, 'at the hand of the Eldest,' proceeds on the morrow. Sorry are we that we cannot follow them into the 'octagonal hall,' so full of paintings, and the 'gallery open on one side, and stretching round 'a spacious, gay, flowery garden.' It is a beautiful figurative representation, by pictures and symbols of Art, of the First and the Second Religions, the Ethnic and the Philosophical ; for the former of which the pictures have been composed from the Old Testament ; for the latter from the New. We can only make room for some small portions.

'"I observe," said Wilhelm, "you have done the Israelites the honour to select their history as the groundwork of this delineation, or rather you have made it the leading object there."

'"As you see," replied the Eldest ; "for you will remark that on the socles and friezes we have introduced another series of transactions and occurrences, not so much of a synchronistic as of a symphronistic kind ; since among all nations, we discover records of a similar import, and grounded on the same facts. Thus you perceive here, while, in the main field of the picture, Abraham receives a visit from his gods in the form of fair youths, Apollo among the herdsmen of Admetus is painted above on the frieze. From which we may

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learn, that the gods, when they appear to men, are commonly unrecognised of them."

'The friends walked on. Wilhelm, for the most part, met with well-known objects; but they were here exhibited in a livelier, more expressive manner, than he had been used to see them. On some few matters he requested explanation, and at last could not help returning to his former question: "Why the Israelitish history had been chosen in preference to all others?"

'The Eldest answered: "Among all Heathen religions, for such also is the Israelitish, this has the most distinguished advantages; of which I shall mention only a few. At the Ethnic judgment-seat; at the judgment-seat of the God of Nations, it is not asked whether this is the best, the most excellent nation; but whether it lasts, whether it has continued. The Israelitish people never was good for much, as its own leaders, judges, rulers, prophets, have a thousand times reproachfully declared; it possesses few virtues, and most of the faults of other nations: but in cohesion, stedfastness, valour, and when all this would not serve, in obstinate toughness, it has no match. It is the most perseverant nation in the world; it is, it was and it will be, to glorify the name of Jehovah through all ages. We have set it up, therefore, as the pattern figure; as the main figure, to which the others only serve as a frame."

'"It becomes not me to dispute with you," said Wilhelm, "since you have instruction to impart. Open to me, therefore, the other advantages of this people, or rather of its history, of its religion."

'"One chief advantage," said the other, "is its excellent collection of Sacred Books. These stand so happily combined together, that even out of the most diverse elements, the feeling of a whole still rises before us. They are complete enough to satisfy; fragmentary enough to excite; barbarous enough to rouse; tender enough to appease; and for how many other contradicting merits might not these Books, might not this one Book, be praised?"

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'Thus wandering on, they had now reached the gloomy and perplexed periods of the History, the destruction of the City and the Temple, the murder, exile, slavery of whole masses of this stiff-necked people. Its subsequent fortunes were delineated in a cunning allegorical way; a real historical delineation of them would have lain without the limits of true Art.

'At this point, the gallery abruptly terminated in a closed door, and Wilhelm was surprised to see himself already at the end. "In your historical series," said he, "I find a chasm. You have destroyed the Temple of Jerusalem, and dispersed the people; yet you have not introduced the divine Man who taught there shortly before; to whom, shortly before, they would give no ear."

'"To have done this, as you require it, would have been an error. The life of that divine Man, whom you allude to, stands in no connexion with the general history of the world in his time. It was a private life; his teaching was a teaching for individuals. What has publicly befallen vast masses of people, and the minor parts which compose them, belongs to the general History of the World, to the general Religion of the World; the Religion we have named the First. What inwardly befalls individuals belongs to the Second Religion, the Philosophical: such a Religion was it that Christ taught and practised, so long as he went about on Earth. For this reason, the external here closes, and I now open to you the internal."

'A door went back, and they entered a similar gallery; where Wilhelm soon recognised a corresponding series of Pictures from the New Testament. They seemed as if by another hand than the first: all was softer; forms, movements, accompaniments, light and colouring.'

Into this second gallery, with its strange doctrine about 'Miracles and Parables,' the characteristic of the Philosophical Religion, we cannot enter for the present, yet must give one hurried glance. Wilhelm expresses some surprise that these delineations terminate "with the Supper, with the scene where the Master and his Disciples part." He inquires for the remaining portion of the history.

'"In all sorts of instruction," said the Eldest, "in all sorts of communication, we are fond of separating whatever it is possible to separate; for by this means alone can the notion of importance and peculiar significance arise in the young mind. Actual experience of itself mingles and mixes all things together: here, accordingly, we have entirely disjoined that sublime Man's life from its termination. In life, he appears as a true Philosopher,—let not the expression stagger you,—as a Wise Man in the highest sense. He stands firm to his point; he goes on his way inflexibly, and while he exalts the

lower to himself, while he makes the ignorant, the poor, the sick, partakers of his wisdom, of his riches, of his strength, he, on the other hand, in nowise conceals his divine origin; he dares to equal himself with God, nay to declare that he himself is God. In this manner he is wont, from youth upwards, to astound his familiar friends; of these he gains a part to his own cause; irritates the rest against him; and shows to all men, who are aiming at a certain elevation in doctrine and life, what they have to look for from the world. And thus, for the noble portion of mankind, his walk and conversation are even more instructive and profitable than his death: for to those trials every one is called, to this trial but a few. Now, omitting all that results from this consideration, do but look at the touching scene of the Last Supper. Here the Wise Man as it ever is, leaves those that are his own, utterly orphaned behind him; and while he is careful for the Good, he feeds along with them a traitor, by whom he and the Better are to be destroyed."'

This seems to us to have 'a deep, still meaning;' and the longer and closer we examine it, the more it pleases us. Wilhelm is not admitted into the shrine of the Third Religion, the Christian, or that of which Christ's sufferings and death were the symbol, as his walk and conversation had been the symbol of the Second, or Philosophical Religion. "That last Religion," it is said,—

'"That last Religion, which arises from the Reverence of what is Beneath us; that veneratiou of the contradictory, the hated, the avoided, we give to each of our pupils, in small portions, by way of outfit, along with him into the world, merely that he may know where more is to be had, should such a want spring up within him. I invite you to return hither at the end of a year, to attend our general Festival, and see how far your son is advanced: then shall you be admitted into the Sanctuary of Sorrow."

'"Permit me one question," said Wilhelm: "as you have set up the life of this divine Man for a pattern and example, have you likewise selected his sufferings, his death, as a model of exalted patience?"

'"Undoubtedly we have," replied the Eldest. "Of this we make no secret; but we draw a veil over those sufferings, even because we reverence them so highly. We hold it a damnable

audacity to bring forth that torturing Cross, and the Holy One who suffers on it, or to expose them to the light of the Sun, which hid its face when a reckless world forced such a sight on it; to take these mysterious secrets, in which the divine depth of Sorrow lies hid, and play with them, fondle them, trick them out, and rest not till the most reverend of all solemnities appears vulgar and paltry. Let so much for the present suffice—* * * The rest we must still owe you for a twelvemonth. The instruction, which in the interim we give the children, no stranger is allowed to witness: then, however, come to us, and you will hear what our best Speakers think it serviceable to make public on those matters." '

Could we hope that, in its present disjointed state, this emblematic sketch would rise before the minds of our readers; in any measure as it stood before the mind of the writer, that, in considering it, they might seize only an outline of those many meanings which, at less or greater depth lie hidden under it, we should anticipate their thanks for having, a first or a second time, brought it before them. As it is, believing that, to open-minded truth-seeking men, the deliberate words of an open-minded truth-seeking man can in no case be wholly unintelligible, nor the words of such a man as Goethe indifferent, we have transcribed it for their perusal. If we induce them to turn to the original, and study this in its completeness, with so much else that environs it, and bears on it, they will thank us still more. To our own judgment at least, there is a fine and pure significance in this whole delineation: such phrases even as 'the Sanctuary of Sorrow,' 'the divine depth of Sorrow,' have of themselves a pathetic wisdom for us; as indeed a tone of devoutness, of calm, mild, priest-like dignity pervades the whole. In a time like ours, it is rare to see, in the writings of cultivated men, any opinion whatever bearing any mark of sincerity on such a subject as this: yet it is and continues the highest subject, and they that are highest are most fit for studying it, and helping others to study it.

Goethe's *Wanderjahre* was published in his seventy-second year; *Werter* in his twenty-fifth: thus in passing between

these two works, and over *Meister's Lehrjahre* which stands nearly midway, we have glanced over a space of almost fifty years, including within them, of course, whatever was most important in his public or private history. By means of these quotations, so diverse in their tone, we meant to make it visible that a great change had taken place in the moral disposition of the man; a change from inward imprisonment, doubt and discontent, into freedom, belief and clear activity: such a change as, in our opinion, must take place, more or less consciously, in every character that, especially in these times, attains to spiritual manhood; and in characters possessing any thoughtfulness and sensibility, will seldom take place without a too painful consciousness, without bitter conflicts, in which the character itself is to often maimed and impoverished, and which end too often not in victory, but in defeat, or fatal compromise with the enemy. Too often, we may well say; for though many gird on the harness, few bear it warrior-like; still fewer put it off with triumph. Among our own poets, Byron was almost the only man we saw faithfully and manfully struggling, to the end, in this cause; and he died while the victory was still doubtful, or at best, only beginning to be gained. We have already stated our opinion, that Goethe's success in this matter has been more complete than that of any other man in his age; nay that, in the strictest sense, he may almost be called the only one that has so succeeded. On this ground, were it on no other, we have ventured to say, that his spiritual history and procedure must deserve attention; that his opinions, his creations, his mode of thought, his whole picture of the world as it dwells within him, must to his contemporaries be an inquiry of no common interest; of an interest altogether peculiar, and not in this degree exampled in existing literature. These things can be but imperfectly stated here, and must be left, not in a state of demonstration, but at the utmost, of loose fluctuating probability; nevertheless, if inquired into, they will be found to have a precise enough meaning, and, as we believe, a highly important one.

For the rest, what sort of mind it is that has passed through this change, that has gained this victory; how rich and high

a mind ; how learned by study in all that is wisest, by experience in all that is most complex, the brightest as well as the blackest, in man's existence ; gifted with what insight, with what grace and power of utterance, we shall not for the present attempt discussing. All these the reader will learn, who studies his writings with such attention as they merit : and by no other means. Of Goethe's dramatic, lyrical, didactic poems, in their thousandfold expressiveness, for they are full of expressiveness, we can here say nothing. But in every department of Literature, of Art ancient and modern, in many provinces of Science, we shall often meet him ; and hope to have other occasions of estimating what, in these respects, we and all men owe him.

Two circumstances, meanwhile, we have remarked, which to us throw light on the nature of his original faculty for Poetry, and go far to convince us of the Mastery he has attained in that art : these we may here state briefly, for the judgment of such as already know his writings, or the help of such as are beginning to know them. The first is, his singularly emblematic intellect ; his perpetual never-failing tendency to transform into *shape*, into *life*, the opinion, the feeling that may dwell in him ; which, in its widest sense, we reckon to be essentially the grand problem of the Poet. We do not mean mere metaphor and rhetorical trope : these are but the exterior concern, often but the scaffolding of the edifice, which is to be built up (within our thoughts) by means of them. In allusions, in similitudes, though no one known to us is happier, many are more copious than Goethe. But we find this faculty of his in the very essence of his intellect ; and trace it alike in the quiet cunning epigram, the allegory, the quaint device, reminding us of some Quarles or Bunyan ; and in the *Fausts*, the *Tassos*, the *Mignons*, which in their pure and genuine personality, may almost remind us of the *Ariels* and *Hamlets* of Shakspeare. Everything has form, everything has visual existence ; the poet's imagination *bodies forth* the forms of things unseen, his pen turns them to *shape*. This, as a natural endowment, exists in Goethe, we conceive, to a very high degree.

The other characteristic of his mind, which proves to us his acquired mastery in art, as this shows us the extent of his original capacity for it, is his wonderful variety, nay universality; his entire freedom from Mannerism. We read Goethe for years, before we come to see wherein the distinguishing peculiarity of his understanding, of his disposition, even of his way of writing, consists. It seems quite a simple style that of his; remarkable chiefly for its calmness, its perspicuity, in short its commonness; and yet it is the most uncommon of all styles: we feel as if every one might imitate it, and yet it is inimitable. As hard is it to discover in his writings,—though there also, as in every man's writings, the character of the writer must lie recorded,—what sort of spiritual construction he has, what are his temper, his affections, his individual specialities. For all lives freely within him: Philina and Clärchen, Mephistopheles and Mignon, are alike indifferent, or alike dear to him; he is of no sect or caste: he seems not this man or that man, but a man. We reckon this to be the characteristic of a Master in Art of any sort; and true especially of all great Poets. How true is it of Shakspeare and Homer! Who knows, or can figure what the Man Shakspeare was, by the first, by the twentieth perusal of his works? He is a Voice coming to us from the Land of Melody: his old brick dwelling-place, in the mere earthly burgh of Stratford-on-Avon, offers us the most inexplicable enigma. And what is Homer in the *Ilias?* He is THE WITNESS; he has seen, and he reveals it; we hear and believe, but do not behold him. Now compare, with these two Poets, any other two; not of equal genius, for there are none such, but of equal sincerity, who wrote as earnestly and from the heart, like them. Take, for instance, Jean Paul and Lord Byron. The good Richter begins to show himself, in his broad, massive, kindly, quaint significance, before we have read many pages of even his slightest work; and to the last he paints himself much better than his subject. Byron may also be said to have painted nothing else than himself, be his subject what it might. Yet as a test for the culture of a Poet, in his poetical capacity, for his pretensions to mas-

tery and completeness in his art, we cannot but reckon this among the surest. Tried by this, there is no living writer that approaches within many degrees of Goethe.

Thus, it would seem, we consider Goethe to be a richly educated Poet, no less than a richly educated Man; a master both of Humanity and of Poetry; one to whom Experience has given true wisdom, and the 'Melodies Eternal' a perfect utterance for his wisdom. Of the particular form which this humanity, this wisdom has assumed; of his opinions, character, personality,—for these, with whatever difficulty, are and must be decipherable in his writings,—we had much to say: but this also we must decline. In the present state of matters, to speak adequately would be a task too hard for us, and one in which our readers could afford little help, nay in which many of them might take little interest. Meanwhile, we have found a brief cursory sketch on this subject, already written in our language: some parts of it, by way of preparation, we shall here transcribe. It is written by a professed admirer of Goethe; nay, as might almost seem, by a grateful learner, whom he had taught, whom he had helped to lead out of spiritual obstruction, into peace and light. Making due allowance for all this, there is little in the paper that we object to.

'In Goethe's mind,' observes he, 'the first aspect that strikes us is its calmness, then its beauty; a deeper inspection reveals to us its vastness and unmeasured strength. This man rules, and is not ruled. The stern and fiery energies of a most passionate soul lie silent in the centre of his being; a trembling sensibility has been inured to stand, without flinching or murmur, the sharpest trials. Nothing outward, nothing inward, shall agitate or control him. The brightest and most capricious fancy, the most piercing and inquisitive intellect, the wildest and deepest imagination; the highest thrills of joy, the bitterest pangs of sorrow: all these are his, he is not theirs. While he moves every heart from its stedfastness, his own is firm and still: the words that search into the inmost recesses of our nature, he pronounces with a tone of coldness and equanimity; in the deepest pathos he weeps not, or his tears are like water trickling from a rock of adamant. He

is king of himself and of his world; nor does he rule it like a vulgar great man, like a Napoleon or Charles the Twelfth, by the mere brute exertion of his will, grounded on no principle, or on a false one: his faculties and feelings are not fettered or prostrated under the iron sway of Passion, but led and guided in kindly union under the mild sway of Reason; as the fierce primeval elements of Chaos were stilled at the coming of Light, and bound together, under its soft vesture, into a glorious and beneficent Creation.

'This is the true Rest of man; the dim aim of every human soul, the full attainment of only a chosen few. It comes not unsought to any; but the wise are wise because they think no price too high for it. Goethe's inward home has been reared by slow and laborious efforts; but it stands on no hollow or deceitful basis: for his peace is not from blindness, but from clear vision; not from uncertain hope of alteration, but from sure insight into what cannot alter. His world seems once to have been desolate and baleful as that of the darkest sceptic: but he has covered it anew with beauty and solemnity, derived from deeper sources, over which Doubt can have no sway. He has inquired fearlessly, and fearlessly searched out and denied the False; but he has not forgotten, what is equally essential and infinitely harder, to search out and admit the True. His heart is still full of warmth, though his head is clear and cold; the world for him is still full of grandeur, though he clothes it with no false colors; his fellow-creatures are still objects of reverence and love, though their basenesses are plainer to no eye than to his. To reconcile these contradictions is the task of all good men, each for himself, in his own way and manner; a task which, in our age, is encompassed with difficulties peculiar to the time; and which Goethe seems to have accomplished with a success that few can rival. A mind so in unity with itself, even though it were a poor and small one, would arrest our attention, and win some kind regard from us; but when this mind ranks among the strongest and most complicated of the species, it becomes a sight full of interest, a study full of deep instruction.

'Such a mind as Goethe's is the fruit not only of a royal endowment by nature, but also of a culture proportionate to her bounty. In Goethe's original form of spirit we discern the highest gifts of manhood, without any deficiency of the lower: he has an eye and a heart equally for the sublime, the common, and the ridiculous; the elements at once of a poet, a thinker, and a wit. Of his culture we have often spoken al-

ready ; and it deserves again to be held up to praise and imitation. This, as he himself unostentatiously confesses, has been the soul of all his conduct, the great enterprise of his life ; and few that understand him will be apt to deny that he has prospered. As a writer, his resources have been accumulated from nearly all the provinces of human intellect and activity; and he has trained himself to use these complicated instruments with a light expertness which we might have admired in the professor of a solitary department. Freedom, and grace, and smiling earnestness are the characteristics of his works ; the matter of them flows along in chaste abundance, in the softest combination ; and their style is referred to by native critics as the highest specimen of the German tongue.

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'But Goethe's culture as a writer is perhaps less remarkable than his culture as a man. He has learned not in head only, but also in heart ; not from Art and Literature, but also by action and passion, in the rugged school of Experience. If asked what was the grand characteristic of his writings, we should not say knowledge, but wisdom. A mind that has seen, and suffered, and done, speaks to us of what it has tried and conquered. A gay delineation will give us notice of dark and toilsome experiences, of business done in the great deep of the spirit ; a maxim, trivial to the careless eye, will rise with light and solution over long perplexed periods of our own history. It is thus that heart speaks to heart, that the life of one man becomes a possession to all. Here is a mind of the most subtle and tumultuous elements ; but it is governed in peaceful diligence, and its impetuous and ethereal faculties work softly together for good and noble ends. Goethe may be called a Philosopher ; for he loves and has practised as a man the wisdom which, as a poet, he inculcates. Composure and cheerful seriousness seem to breathe over all his character. There is no whining over human woes : it is understood that we must simply all strive to alleviate or remove them. There is no noisy battling for opinions ; but a persevering effort to make Truth lovely, and recommend her, by a thousand avenues, to the hearts of all men. Of his personal manners we can easily believe the universal report, as often given in the way of censure as of praise, that he is a man of consummate breeding and the stateliest presence : for an air of polished tolerance, of courtly, we might almost say, majestic repose and serene humanity, is visible throughout

his works. In no line of them does he speak with asperity of any man; scarcely ever even of a thing. He knows the good, and loves it; he knows the bad and hateful, and rejects it; but in neither case with violence: his love is calm and active; his rejection is implied, rather than pronounced; meek and gentle, though we see that it is thorough, and never to be revoked. The noblest and the basest he not only seems to comprehend, but to personate and body forth in their most secret lineaments: hence actions and opinions appear to him as they are, with all the circumstances which extenuate or endear them to the hearts where they originated and are entertained. This also is the spirit of our Shakspeare, and perhaps of every great dramatic poet. Shakspeare is no sectarian; to all he deals with equity and mercy; because he knows all, and his heart is wide enough for all. In his mind the world is a whole; he figures it as Providence governs it; and to him it is not strange that the sun should be caused to shine on the evil and the good, and the rain to fall on the just and the unjust.'

Considered as a transient far-off view of Goethe in his personal character, all this, from the writer's peculiar point of vision may have its true grounds, and wears at least the aspect of sincerity. We may also quote something of what follows on Goethe's character as a poet and thinker, and the contrast he exhibits in this respect with another celebrated, and now altogether European author.

'Goethe,' observes this Critic, 'has been called the "German Voltaire;" but it is a name which does him wrong and describes him ill. Except in the corresponding variety of their pursuits and knowledge, in which, perhaps, it does Voltaire wrong, the two cannot be compared. Goethe is all, or the best of all, that Voltaire was, and he is much that Voltaire did not dream of. To say nothing of his dignified and truthful character as a man, he belongs, as a thinker and a writer, to a far higher class than this *enfant gâté du monde qu'il gâta.* He is not a questioner and a despiser, but a teacher and a reverencer; not a destroyer, but a builder-up; not a wit only but a wise man. Of him Montesquieu could not have said, with even epigrammatic truth: *Il a plus que personne l'esprit que tout le monde a.* Voltaire is the *cleverest* of all past and present men; but a great man is something more, and this he surely was not.'

Whether this epigram, which we have seen in some Biographical Dictionary, really belongs to Montesquieu, we know not; but it does seem to us not wholly inapplicable to Voltaire, and at all events, highly expressive of an important distinction among men of talent generally. In fact, the popular man, and the man of true, at least of great originality, are seldom one and the same; we suspect that, till after a long struggle on the part of the latter, they are never so. Reasons are obvious enough. The popular man stands on our own level, or a hairsbreadth higher; he shows us a truth which we can see without shifting our present intellectual position. This is a highly convenient arrangement. The original man, again, stands above us; he wishes to wrench us from our old fixtures, and elevate us to a higher and clearer level: but to quit our old fixtures, especially if we have sat in them with moderate comfort for some score or two of years, is no such easy business; accordingly we demur, we resist, we even give battle; we still suspect that he is above us, but try to persuade ourselves (Laziness and Vanity earnestly assenting) that he is below. For is it not the very essence of such a man that he be *new?* And who will warrant us that, at the same time, he shall only be an intensation and continuation of the *old*, which, in general, is what we long and look for? No one can warrant us. And, granting him to be a man of real genius, real depth, and that speaks not till after earnest meditation, what sort of a philosophy were his, could *we* estimate the length, breadth and thickness of it at a single glance? And when did Criticism give two glances? Criticism, therefore, opens on such a man its greater and its lesser batteries, on every side: he has no security but to go on disregarding it; and 'in the end,' says Goethe, 'Criticism itself comes to relish that method.' But now let a speaker of the other class come forward; one of those men that 'have more than any one, the opinion which all men have!' No sooner does he speak, than all and sundry of us feel as if we had been wishing to speak that very thing, as if we ourselves might have spoken it; and forthwith resounds from the united universe a celebration of that surprising feat. What clearness, brilliancy,

justness, penetration! Who can doubt that this man is right, when so many thousand votes are ready to back him? Doubtless, he is right; doubtless, he is a clever man; and his praise will long be in all the Magazines.

Clever men are good, but they are not the best. 'The instruction they can give us is like baked bread, savoury and 'satisfying for a single day;' but, unhappily, 'flour cannot 'be sown, and seed-corn ought not to be ground.' We proceed with our Critic in his contrast of Goethe with Voltaire.

'As poets,' continues he, 'the two live not in the same hemisphere, not in the same world. Of Voltaire's poetry, it were blindness to deny the polished, intellectual vigour, the logical symmetry, the flashes that from time to time give it the colour, if not the warmth, of fire: but it is in a far other sense than this that Goethe is a poet; in a sense of which the French literature has never afforded any example. We may venture to say of him, that his province is high and peculiar; higher than any poet but himself, for several generations, has so far succeeded in, perhaps even has stedfastly attempted. In reading Goethe's poetry, it perpetually strikes us that we are reading the poetry of our own day and generation. No demands are made on our credulity; the light, the science, the scepticism of our age, is not hid from us. He does not deal in antiquated mythologies, or ring changes on traditionary poetic forms; there are no supernal, no infernal influences,—for *Faust* is an apparent, rather than a real exception; but there is the barren prose of the nineteenth century, the vulgar life which we are all leading, and it starts into strange beauty in his hands, and we pause in delighted wonder to behold the flowerage of poesy blooming in that parched and rugged soil. This is the end of his Mignons and Harpers, of his *Hermanns* and *Meisters*. Poetry, as he views it, exists not in time or place, but in the spirit of man; and Art with Nature is now to perform for the poet what Nature alone performed of old. The divinities and demons, the witches, spectres and fairies, are vanished from the world, never again to be recalled: but the Imagination, which created these, still lives, and will forever live, in man's soul; and can again pour its wizard light over the Universe, and summon forth enchantments as lovely or impressive, and which its sister faculties will not contradict. To say that Goethe has accomplished all

this, would be to say that his genius is greater than was ever given to any man : for if it was a high and glorious mind, or rather series of minds, that peopled the first ages with their peculiar forms of poetry, it must be a series of minds much higher and more glorious that shall so people the present. The angels and demons that can lay prostrate our hearts in the nineteenth century, must be of another and more cunning fashion than those who subdued us in the ninth. To have attempted, to have begun this enterprise, may be accounted the greatest praise. That Goethe ever meditated it, in the form here set forth, we have no direct evidence : but, indeed, such is the end and aim of high poetry at all times and seasons ; for the fiction of the poet is not falsehood, but the purest truth ; and, if he would lead captive our whole being, not rest satisfied with a part of it, he must address us on interests that *are*, not that *were* ours ; and in a dialect which finds a response, and not a contradiction, within our bosoms.' [1]

Here, however, we must terminate our pilferings, or open robberies, and bring these straggling lucubrations to a close. In the extracts we have given, in the remarks made on them and on the subject of them, we are aware that we have held the attitude of admirers and pleaders : neither is it unknown to us that the critic is, in virtue of his office, a judge, and not an advocate ; sits there, not to do favour, but to dispense justice, which in most cases will involve blame as well as praise. But we are firm believers in the maxim that, for all right judgment of any man or thing, it is useful, nay essential, to see his good qualities before pronouncing on his bad. This maxim is so clear to ourselves, that, in respect to poetry at least, we almost think we could make it clear to other men. In the first place, at all events, it is a much shallower and more ignoble occupation to detect faults than to discover beauties. The 'critic fly,' if it do but alight on any plinth or single cornice of a brave stately building, shall be able to declare, with its half-inch vision, that here is a speck, and there an inequality ; that, in fact, this and the other individual stone are nowise as they should be ; for all this the 'critic fly' will be sufficient : but to take in the fair relations of the

[1] German Romance, vol. iv. pp. 17-25. (Appendix I. § *Goethe* infra.)

Whole, to see the building as one object, to estimate its purpose, the adjustment of its parts, and their harmonious coöperation towards that purpose, will require the eye and the mind of a Vitruvius, or a Palladio. But farther, the faults of a poem, or other piece of art, as we view them at first, will by no means continue unaltered when we view them after due and final investigation. Let us consider what we mean by a fault. By the word fault, we designate something that displeases us, that contradicts us. But here the question might arise: Who are *we?* This fault displeases, contradicts *us;* so far is clear; and had *we*, had *I*, and *my* pleasure and confirmation, been the chief end of the poet, then doubtless he has failed in that end, and his fault remains a fault irremediably, and without defence. But who shall say whether such really was his object, whether such ought to have been his object? And if it was not, and ought not to have been, what becomes of the fault? It must hang altogether undecided; we as yet know nothing of it; perhaps it may not be the poet's, but our own fault; perhaps it may be no fault whatever. To see rightly into this matter, to determine with any infallibility whether what we call a fault *is* in very deed a fault, we must previously have settled two points, neither of which may be so readily settled. First, we must have made plain to ourselves what the poet's aim really and truly was, how the task he had to do stood before his own eye, and how far, with such means as it afforded him, he has fulfilled it. Secondly, we must have decided whether and how far this aim, this task of his, accorded,—not with *us*, and our individual crotchets, and the crotchets of our little senate where we give or take the law,—but with human nature, and the nature of things at large; with the universal principles of poetic beauty, not as they stand written in our text-books, but in the hearts and imaginations of all men. Does the answer in either case come out unfavourable; was there an inconsistency between the means and the end, a discordance between the end and truth, there is a fault: was there not, there is no fault.

Thus it would appear that the detection of faults, provided they be faults of any depth and consequence, leads us of itself

into that region where also the higher beauties of the piece, if it have any true beauties, essentially reside. In fact, according to our view, no man can pronounce dogmatically, with even a chance of being right, on the faults of a poem, till he has seen its very last and highest beauty; the last in becoming visible to any one, which few ever look after, which indeed in most pieces it were very vain to look after; the beauty of the poem as a Whole, in the strict sense; the clear view of it as an indivisible Unity; and whether it has grown up naturally from the general soil of Thought, and stands there like a thousand-years Oak, no leaf, no bough superfluous; or is nothing but a pasteboard Tree, cobbled together out of size and waste-paper and water-colours; altogether unconnected with the soil of Thought, except by mere juxtaposition, or at best united with it by some decayed *stump* and *dead boughs*, which the more cunning Decorationist (as in your Historic Novel) may have selected for the basis and support of his agglutinations. It is true, most readers judge of a poem by pieces, they praise and blame by pieces; it is a common practice, and for most poems and most readers may be perfectly sufficient: yet we would advise no man to follow this practice, who traces in himself even the slightest capability of following a better one; and, if possible, we would advise him to practise only on worthy subjects; to read few poems that will not bear being studied as well as read.

That Goethe has his faults cannot be doubtful; for we believe it was ascertained long ago that there is no man free from them. Neither are we ourselves without some glimmering of certain actual limitations and inconsistencies by which he too, as he really lives and writes and is, may be hemmed-in; which beset him too, as they do meaner men; which show us that he too is a son of Eve. But to exhibit these before our readers, in the present state of matters, we should reckon no easy labour, were it to be adequately, to be justly done; and done anyhow, no profitable one. Better is it we should first study him; better to '*see* the great man before attempting to *oversee* him.' We are not ignorant that certain objections against Goethe already float vaguely in the English

mind, and here and there, according to occasion, have even come to utterance: these, as the study of him proceeds, we shall hold ourselves ready, in due season, to discuss; but for the present we must beg the reader to believe, on our word, that we do not reckon them unanswerable, nay that we reckon them in general the most answerable things in the world; and things which even a little increase of knowledge will not fail to answer without other help.

For furthering such increase of knowledge on this matter, may we beg the reader to accept two small pieces of advice, which we ourselves have found to be of use in studying Goethe. They seem applicable to the study of Foreign Literature generally; indeed to the study of all Literature that deserves the name.

The first is, nowise to suppose that Poetry is a superficial, cursory business, which may be seen through to the very bottom, so soon as one inclines to cast his eye on it. We reckon it the falsest of all maxims that a true Poem can be adequately *tasted;* can be judged of 'as men judge of a dinner,' by some internal *tongue*, that shall decide on the matter at once and irrevocably. Of the poetry which supplies spouting-clubs, and circulates in circulating libraries, we speak not here. That is quite another species; which has circulated, and will circulate, and ought to circulate, in all times; but for the study of which no man is required to give rules, the rules being already given by the thing itself. We speak of that Poetry which Masters write, which aims not at 'furnishing a languid mind with fantastic shows and indolent emotions,' but at incorporating the everlasting Reason of man in forms visible to his Sense, and suitable to it: and of this we say, that to know it is no slight task; but rather that, being the essence of all science, it requires the purest of all study for knowing it. "What!" cries the reader, "are we to *study* Poetry? To pore over it as we do over Fluxions?" Reader, it depends upon your object: if you want only *amusement*, choose your book, and you get along, without study, excellently well. "But is not Shakspeare plain, visible to the very bottom, without study?" cries he. Alas, no, gentle

Reader; we cannot think so; we do not find that he is visible to the very bottom even to those that profess the study of him. It has been our lot to read some criticisms on Shakspeare, and to hear a great many; but for most part they amounted to no such 'visibility.' Volumes we have seen that were simply one huge Interjection printed over three hundred pages. Nine-tenths of our critics have told us little more of Shakspeare, than what honest Franz Horn says our neighbours used to tell of him, 'that he was a great spirit, and stept majestically along.' Johnson's Preface, a sound and solid piece for its purpose, is a complete exception to this rule; and, so far as we remember, the only complete one. Students of poetry admire Shakspeare in their tenth year; but go on admiring him more and more, understanding him more and more, till their threescore-and-tenth. Grotius said, he read Terence otherwise than boys do. 'Happy contractedness of youth,' adds Goethe, 'nay, of men in general; that at all 'moments of their existence they can look upon themselves 'as complete; and inquire neither after the True nor the 'False, nor the High nor the Deep; but simply after what is 'proportioned to themselves.'

Our second advice we shall state in few words. It is, to remember that a Foreigner is no Englishman; that in judging a foreign work, it is not enough to ask whether it is suitable to our *modes*, but whether it is suitable to foreign *wants;* above all, whether it is suitable to *itself*. The fairness, the necessity of this can need no demonstration; yet how often do we find it, in practice, altogether neglected! We could fancy we saw some Bond-street Tailor criticising the costume of an ancient Greek; censuring the highly improper cut of collar and lapel; lamenting, indeed, that collar and lapel were nowhere to be seen. He pronounces the costume, easily and decisively, to be a barbarous one: to know whether it *is* a barbarous one, and how barbarous, the judgment of a Winkelmann might be required, and he would find it hard to give a judgment. For the questions set before the two were radically different. The Fraction asked himself: How will this look in Almacks, and before Lord Mahogany? The Winkelmann asked himself:

How will this look in the Universe, and before the Creator of Man?

Whether these remarks of ours may do anything to forward a right appreciation of Goethe in this country, we know not; neither do we reckon this last result to be of any vital importance. Yet must we believe that, in recommending Goethe, we are doing our part to recommend a truer study of Poetry itself; and happy were we to fancy that any effort of ours could promote such an object. Promoted, attained it will be, as we believe, by one means and another. A deeper feeling for Art is abroad over Europe; a purer, more earnest purpose in the study, in the practice of it. In this influence we too must participate: the time will come when our own ancient noble Literature will be studied and felt, as well as talked of; when Dilettanteism will give place to Criticism in respect of it; and vague wonder end in clear knowledge, in sincere reverence, and, what were best of all, in hearty emulation.

BURNS.

BURNS.

Our grand maxim of supply and demand. Living misery and posthumous glory. The character of Burns a theme that cannot easily become exhausted. His Biographers. Perfection in Biography. (123).—Burns, one of the most considerable British men of the eighteenth century: An age the most prosaic Britain had yet seen. His hard and most disadvantageous conditions. Not merely as a poet, but as a man, that he chiefly interests and affects us. His life a deeper tragedy than any brawling Napoleon's. His heart, erring and at length broken, full of inborn riches, of love to all living and lifeless things. The Peasant Poet bears himself among the low, with whom his lot is cast, like a King in exile. (126).—His Writings but a poor mutilated fraction of what was in him, yet of a quality enduring as the English tongue. He wrote, not from hearsay, but from sight and actual experience. This, easy as it looks, the fundamental difficulty which all poets have to strive with. Byron, heartily as he detested insincerity, far enough from faultless. No poet of Burns's susceptibility from first to last so totally free from affectation. Some of his Letters, however, by no means deserve this praise. His singular power of making all subjects, even the most homely, interesting. Wherever there is a sky above him and a world around him the poet is in his place. Every genius an impossibility till he appears. (131).—Burns's rugged earnest truth, yet tenderness and sweet native grace. His clear graphic 'descriptive touches' and piercing emphasis of thought. Professor Stewart's testimony to Burns's intellectual vigour. A deeper insight than any 'doctrine of association.' In the Poetry of Burns, keenness of insight keeps pace with keenness of feeling. Loving Indignation and *good* Hatred: *Scots wha hae: Macpherson's Farewell:* Sunny buoyant floods of Humour. (138).—Imperfections of Burns's poetry: *Tam o'Shanter*, not a true poem so much as a piece of sparkling rhetoric: The *Jolly Beggars*, the most complete and perfect as a poetical composition. His Songs the most truly inspired and most deeply felt of all his poems. His influence on the hearts and literature of his country: Literary patriotism. (147).—Burns's acted Works even more interesting than his written ones; and these too, alas, but a fragment: His passionate youth never passed into clear and stedfast manhood. The only true happiness of a man: Often it is the greatest minds that are the latest in obtaining it: Burns and Byron. Burns's hard-worked, yet happy boyhood: His estimable parents. Early dissipations. In Necessity and Obedience a man should find his highest Freedom. (154).—Religious quarrels and scepticisms. Faithlessness: Exile and blackest desperation. Invited to Edinburgh: A Napoleon among the crowned sovereigns of Literature. Sir Walter Scott's reminiscence of an interview with Burns. Burns's calm manly bearing amongst the Edinburgh aristocracy. His bitter feeling of his own indigence. By the great he is treated in the customary fashion; and each party goes his

several way. (158).—What Burns was next to do, or to avoid: His Excise and Farm scheme not an unreasonable one: No failure of external means, but of internal, that overtook Burns. Good beginnings. Patrons of genius and picturesque tourists: Their moral rottenness, by which he became infected, gradually eat out the heart of his life. Meteors of French Politics rise before him, but they are not *his* stars. Calumny is busy with him. The little great-folk of Dumfries: Burns's desolation. In his destitution and degradation one act of self-devotedness still open to him: Not as a hired soldier, but as a patriot, would he strive for the glory of his country. The crisis of his life: Death. (164).—Little effectual help could perhaps have been rendered to Burns: Patronage twice cursed: Many a poet has been poorer, none prouder. And yet much might have been done to have made his humble atmosphere more genial. Little Babylons and Babylonians: Let us go and *do otherwise.* The market-price of Wisdom. Not in the power of *any* mere external circumstances to ruin the mind of a man. The errors of Burns to be mourned over, rather than blamed. The great want of his life was the great want of his age, a true faith in Religion and a singleness and unselfishness of aim. (170).—Poetry, as Burns could and ought to have followed it, is but another form of Wisdom, of Religion. For his culture as a Poet, poverty and much suffering for a season were absolutely advantageous. To divide his hours between poetry and rich men's banquets an ill-starred attempt. Byron, rich in worldly means and honours, no whit happier than Burns in his poverty and worldly degradation: They had a message from on High to deliver, which could leave them no rest while it remained unaccomplished. Death and the rest of the grave: A stern moral, *twice* told us in our own time. The world habitually unjust in its judgments of such men. With men of right feeling anywhere, there will be no need to plead for Burns: In pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts.(176).

BURNS.[1]

[1828.]

In the modern arrangements of society, it is no uncommon thing that a man of genius must, like Butler, 'ask for bread and receive a stone;' for in spite of our grand maxim of supply and demand, it is by no means the highest excellence that men are most forward to recognise. The inventor of a spinning-jenny is pretty sure of his reward in his own day; but the writer of a true poem, like the apostle of a true religion, is nearly as sure of the contrary. We do not know whether it is not an aggravation of the injustice, that there is generally a posthumous retribution. Robert Burns, in the course of Nature, might yet have been living; but his short life was spent in toil and penury; and he died, in the prime of his manhood, miserable and neglected: and yet already a brave mausoleum shines over his dust, and more than one splendid monument has been reared in other places to his fame; the street where he languished in poverty is called by his name; the highest personages in our literature have been proud to appear as his commentators and admirers; and here is the *sixth* narrative of his *Life* that has been given to the world!

Mr. Lockhart thinks it necessary to apologise for this new attempt on such a subject; but his readers, we believe, will readily acquit him; or, at worst, will censure only the performance of his task, not the choice of it. The character of Burns, indeed, is a theme that cannot easily become either trite or exhausted; and will probably gain rather than lose in its di-

[1] Edinburgh Review, No. 96.—The Life of Robert Burns. By J. G. Lockhart, LL.B. Edinburgh, 1828.

mensions by the distance to which it is removed by Time. No man, it has been said, is a hero to his valet; and this is probably true; but the fault is at least as likely to be the valet's as the hero's. For it is certain, that to the vulgar eye few things are wonderful that are not distant. It is difficult for men to believe that the man, the mere man whom they see, nay perhaps painfully feel, toiling at their side through the poor jostlings of existence, can be made of finer clay than themselves. Suppose that some dining acquaintance of Sir Thomas Lucy's, and neighbour of John a Combe's, had snatched an hour or two from the preservation of his game, and written us a Life of Shakspeare! What dissertations should we not have had,—not on *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*, but on the wool-trade, and deer-stealing, and the libel and vagrant laws; and how the Poacher became a Player; and how Sir Thomas and Mr. John had Christian bowels, and did not push him to extremities! In like manner, we believe, with respect to Burns, that till the companions of his pilgrimage, the Honourable Excise Commissioners, and the Gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt, and the Dumfries Aristocracy, and all the Squires and Earls, equally with the Ayr Writers, and the New and Old Light Clergy, whom he had to do with, shall have become invisible in the darkness of the Past, or visible only by light borrowed from *his* juxtaposition, it will be difficult to measure him by any true standard, or to estimate what he really was and did, in the eighteenth century, for his country and the world. It will be difficult, we say; but still a fair problem for literary historians; and repeated attempts will give us repeated approximations.

His former Biographers have done something, no doubt, but by no means a great deal, to assist us. Dr. Currie and Mr. Walker, the principal of these writers, have both, we think, mistaken one essentially important thing: Their own and the world's true relation to their author, and the style in which it became such men to think and to speak of such a man. Dr. Currie loved the poet truly; more perhaps than he avowed to his readers, or even to himself; yet he everywhere introduces him with a certain patronising, apologetic air; as if the polite

public might think it strange and half unwarrantable that he, a man of science, a scholar and gentleman, should do such honour to a rustic. In all this, however, we readily admit that his fault was not want of love, but weakness of faith; and regret that the first and kindest of all our poet's biographers should not have seen farther, or believed more boldly what he saw. Mr. Walker offends more deeply in the same kind: and both err alike in presenting us with a detached catalogue of his several supposed attributes, virtues and vices, instead of a delineation of the resulting character as a living unity. This, however, is not painting a portrait: but gauging the length and breadth of the several features, and jotting down their dimensions in arithmetical ciphers. Nay, it is not so much as this: for we are yet to learn by what arts or instruments the mind *could* be so measured and gauged.

Mr. Lockhart, we are happy to say, has avoided both these errors. He uniformly treats Burns as the high and remarkable man the public voice has now pronounced him to be: and in delineating him, he has avoided the method of separate generalities, and rather sought for characteristic incidents, habits, actions, sayings; in a word, for aspects which exhibit the whole man, as he looked and lived among his fellows. The book accordingly, with all its deficiencies, gives more insight, we think, into the true character of Burns, than any prior biography: though, being written on the very popular and condensed scheme of an article for *Constable's Miscellany*, it has less depth than we could have wished and expected from a writer of such power; and contains rather more, and more multifarious, quotations, than belong of right to an original production. Indeed, Mr. Lockhart's own writing is generally so good, so clear, direct and nervous, that we seldom wish to see it making place for another man's. However, the spirit of the work is throughout candid, tolerant and anxiously conciliating; compliments and praises are liberally distributed, on all hands, to great and small; and, as Mr. Morris Birkbeck observes of the society in the backwoods of America, 'the courtesies of polite life are never lost sight of for a moment.' But there are better things than these in the volume; and

we can safely testify, not only that it is easily and pleasantly read a first time, but may even be without difficulty read again.

Nevertheless, we are far from thinking that the problem of Burns's Biography has yet been adequately solved. We do not allude so much to deficiency of facts or documents,—though of these we are still every day receiving some fresh accession,—as to the limited and imperfect application of them to the great end of Biography. Our notions upon this subject may perhaps appear extravagant; but if an individual is really of consequence enough to have his life and character recorded for public remembrance, we have always been of opinion, that the public ought to be made acquainted with all the inward springs and relations of his character. How did the world and man's life, from his particular position, represent themselves to his mind? How did coexisting circumstances modify him from without; how did he modify these from within? With what endeavours and what efficacy rule over them; with what resistance and what suffering sink under them? In one word, what and how produced was the effect of society on him; what and how produced was his effect on society? He who should answer these questions, in regard to any individual, would, as we believe, furnish a model of perfection in Biography. Few individuals, indeed, can deserve such a study; and many *lives* will be written, and, for the gratification of innocent curiosity, ought to be written, and read and forgotten, which are not in this sense *biographies*. But Burns, if we mistake not, is one of these few individuals; and such a study, at least with such a result, he has not yet obtained. Our own contributions to it, we are aware, can be but scanty and feeble; but we offer them with good-will, and trust they may meet with acceptance from those they are intended for.

Burns first came upon the world as a prodigy; and was, in that character, entertained by it, in the usual fashion, with loud, vague, tumultuous wonder, speedily subsiding into censure and neglect; till his early and most mournful death again awakened an enthusiasm for him, which, especially as

there was now nothing to be done, and much to be spoken, has prolonged itself even to our own time. It is true, the 'nine days' have long since elapsed; and the very continuance of this clamour proves that Burns was no vulgar wonder. Accordingly, even in sober judgments, where, as years passed by, he has come to rest more and more exclusively on his own intrinsic merits, and may now be wellnigh shorn of that casual radiance, he appears not only as a true British poet, but as one of the most considerable British men of the eighteenth century. Let it not be objected that he did little. He did much, if we consider where and how. If the work performed was small, we must remember that he had his very materials to discover; for the metal he worked in lay hid under the desert moor, where no eye but his had guessed its existence; and we may almost say, that with his own hand he had to construct the tools for fashioning it. For he found himself in deepest obscurity, without help, without instruction, without model; or with models only of the meanest sort. An educated man stands, as it were, in the midst of a boundless arsenal and magazine, filled with all the weapons and engines which man's skill has been able to devise from the earliest time; and he works, accordingly, with a strength borrowed from all past ages. How different is *his* state who stands on the outside of that storehouse, and feels that its gates must be stormed, or remain forever shut against him! His means are the commonest and rudest; the mere work done is no measure of his strength. A dwarf behind his steam-engine may remove mountains; but no dwarf will hew them down with the pickaxe; and he must be a Titan that hurls them abroad with his arms.

It is in this last shape that Burns presents himself. Born in an age the most prosaic Britain had yet seen, and in a condition the most disadvantageous, where his mind, if it accomplished aught, must accomplish it under the pressure of continual bodily toil, nay of penury and desponding apprehension of the worst evils, and with no furtherance but such knowledge as dwells in a poor man's hut, and the rhymes of a Ferguson or Ramsay for his standard of beauty, he sinks

not under all these impediments: through the fogs and darkness of that obscure region, his lynx eye discerns the true relations of the world and human life; he grows into intellectual strength, and trains himself into intellectual expertness. Impelled by the expansive movement of his own irrepressible soul, he struggles forward into the general view; and with haughty modesty lays down before us, as the fruit of his labour, a gift, which Time has now pronounced imperishable. Add to all this, that his darksome, drudging childhood and youth was by far the kindliest era of his whole life; and that he died in his thirty-seventh year: and then ask, If it be strange that his poems are imperfect, and of small extent, or that his genius attained no mastery in its art? Alas, his Sun shone as through a tropical tornado; and the pale Shadow of Death eclipsed it at noon! Shrouded in such baleful vapours, the genius of Burns was never seen in clear azure splendour, enlightening the world: but some beams from it did, by fits, pierce through; and it tinted those clouds with rainbow and orient colours, into a glory and stern grandeur, which men silently gazed on with wonder and tears!

We are anxious not to exaggerate; for it is exposition rather than admiration that our readers require of us here; and yet to avoid some tendency to that side is no easy matter. We love Burns, and we pity him; and love and pity are prone to magnify. Criticism, it is sometimes thought, should be a cold business; we are not so sure of this; but, at all events, our concern with Burns is not exclusively that of critics. True and genial as his poetry must appear, it is not chiefly as a poet, but as a man, that he interests and affects us. He was often advised to write a tragedy: time and means were not lent him for this; but through life he enacted a tragedy, and one of the deepest. We question whether the world has since witnessed so utterly sad a scene; whether Napoleon himself, left to brawl with Sir Hudson Lowe, and perish on his rock, 'amid the melancholy main,' presented to the reflecting mind such a 'spectacle of pity and fear,' as did this intrinsically nobler, gentler and perhaps greater soul, wasting itself away in a hopeless struggle with base entangle-

ments, which coiled closer and closer round him, till only death opened him an outlet. Conquerors are a class of men with whom, for most part, the world could well dispense; nor can the hard intellect, the unsympathising loftiness and high but selfish enthusiasm of such persons inspire us in general with any affection; at best it may excite amazement; and their fall, like that of a pyramid, will be beheld with a certain sadness and awe. But a true Poet, a man in whose heart resides some effluence of Wisdom, some tone of the 'Eternal Melodies,' is the most precious gift that can be bestowed on a generation: we see in him a freer, purer development of whatever is noblest in ourselves; his life is a rich lesson to us; and we mourn his death as that of a benefactor who loved and taught us.

Such a gift had Nature, in her bounty, bestowed on us in Robert Burns; but with queenlike indifference she cast it from her hand, like a thing of no moment; and it was defaced and torn asunder, as an idle bauble, before we recognised it. To the ill-starred Burns was given the power of making man's life more venerable, but that of wisely guiding his own life was not given. Destiny,—for so in our ignorance we must speak,—his faults, the faults of others, proved too hard for him; and that spirit, which might have soared could it but have walked, soon sank to the dust, its glorious faculties trodden under foot in the blossom; and died, we may almost say, without ever having lived. And so kind and warm a soul; so full of inborn riches, of love to all living and lifeless things! How his heart flows out in sympathy over universal Nature; and in her bleakest provinces discerns a beauty and a meaning! The 'Daisy' falls not unheeded under his ploughshare; nor the ruined nest of that 'wee, cowering, timorous beastie,' cast forth, after all its provident pains, to 'thole the sleety dribble and cranreuch cauld.' The 'hoar visage' of Winter delights him; he dwells with a sad and oft-returning fondness in these scenes of solemn desolation; but the voice of the tempest becomes an anthem to his ears; he loves to walk in the sounding woods, for 'it raises his thoughts to *Him that walketh on the wings of the wind.*' A true Poet-soul, for it

needs but to be struck, and the sound it yields will be music! But observe him chiefly as he mingles with his brother men. What warm, all comprehending fellow-feeling; what trustful, boundless love; what generous exaggeration of the object loved! His rustic friend, his nut-brown maiden, are no longer mean and homely, but a hero and a queen, whom he prizes as the paragons of Earth. The rough scenes of Scottish life, not seen by him in any Arcadian illusion, but in the rude contradiction, in the smoke and soil of a too harsh reality, are still lovely to him: Poverty is indeed his companion, but Love also, and Courage; the simple feelings, the worth, the nobleness, that dwell under the straw roof, are dear and venerable to his heart: and thus over the lowest provinces of man's existence he pours the glory of his own soul; and they rise, in shadow and sunshine, softened and brightened into a beauty which other eyes discern not in the highest. He has a just self-consciousness, which too often degenerates into pride; yet it is a noble pride, for defence, not for offence; no cold suspicious feeling, but a frank and social one. The Peasant Poet bears himself, we might say, like a King in exile: he is cast among the low, and feels himself equal to the highest; yet he claims no rank, that none may be disputed to him. The forward he can repel, the supercilious he can subdue; pretentions of wealth or ancestry are of no avail with him; there is a fire in that dark eye, under which the 'insolence of condescension' cannot thrive. In his abasement, in his extreme need, he forgets not for a moment the majesty of Poetry and Manhood. And yet, far as he feels himself above common men, he wanders not apart from them, but mixes warmly in their interests; nay, throws himself into their arms, and, as it were, entreats them to love him. It is moving to see how, in his darkest despondency, this proud being still seeks relief from friendship; unbosoms himself, often to the unworthy; and, amid tears, strains to his glowing heart a heart that knows only the name of friendship. And yet he was 'quick to learn;' a man of keen vision, before whom common disguises afforded no concealment. His understanding saw through the hollowness even

of accomplished deceivers ; but there was a generous credulity in his heart. And so did our Peasant show himself among us ; 'a soul like an Æolian harp, in whose strings the vulgar 'wind, as it passed through them, changed itself into articu-'late melody.' And this was he for whom the world found no fitter business than quarrelling with smugglers and vint-ners, computing excise-dues upon tallow, and gauging ale-barrels! In such toils was that mighty Spirit sorrowfully wasted : and a hundred years may pass on, before another such is given us to waste.

All that remains of Burns, the Writings he has left, seem to us, as we hinted above, no more than a poor mutilated frac-tion of what was in him ; brief, broken glimpses of a genius that could never show itself complete ; that wanted all things for completeness : culture, leisure, true effort, nay even length of life. His poems are, with scarcely any exception, mere oc-casional effusions ; poured forth with little premeditation ; expressing, by such means as offered, the passion, opinion, or humor of the hour. Never in one instance was it permitted him to grapple with any subject with the full collection of his strength, to fuse and mould in the concentrated fire of his genius. To try by the strict rules of Art such imperfect frag-ments, would be at once unprofitable and unfair. Neverthe-less, there is something in these poems, marred and defective as they are, which forbids the most fastidious student of poetry to pass them by. Some sort of enduring quality they must have : for, after fifty years of the wildest vicissitudes in poetic taste, they still continue to be read ; nay, are read more and more eagerly, more and more extensively ; and this not only by literary virtuosos, and that class upon whom transi-tory causes operate most strongly, but by all classes, down to the most hard, unlettered and truly natural class, who read little, and especially no poetry, except because they find pleas-ure in it. The grounds of so singular and wide a popularity, which extends, in a literal sense, from the palace to the hut, and over all regions where the English tongue is spoken, are well worth inquiring into. After every just deduction, it

seems to imply some rare excellence in these works. What is that excellence?

To answer this question will not lead us far. The excellence of Burns is, indeed, among the rarest, whether in poetry or prose; but, at the same time, it is plain and easily recognised: his *Sincerity*, his indisputable air of Truth. Here are no fabulous woes or joys; no hollow fantastic sentimentalities; no wiredrawn refinings, either in thought or feeling: the passion that is traced before us has glowed in a living heart; the opinion he utters has risen in his own understanding, and been a light to his own steps. He does not write from hearsay, but from sight and experience; it is the scenes that he has lived and labored amidst, that he describes: those scenes, rude and humble as they are, have kindled beautiful emotions in his soul, noble thoughts, and definite resolves; and he speaks forth what is in him, not from any outward call of vanity or interest, but because his heart is too full to be silent. He speaks it with such melody and modulation as he can; 'in homely rustic jingle;' but it is his own, and genuine. This is the grand secret for finding readers and retaining them: let him who would move and convince others, be first moved and convinced himself. Horace's rule. *Si vis me flere*, is applicable in a wider sense than the literal one. To every poet, to every writer, we might say: Be true, if you would be believed. Let a man but speak forth with genuine earnestness the thought, the emotion, the actual condition of his own heart; and other men, so strangely are we all knit together by the tie of sympathy, must and will give heed to him. In culture, in extent of view, we may stand above the speaker, or below him; but in either case, his words, if they are earnest and sincere, will find some response within us; for in spite of all casual varieties in outward rank, or inward, as face answers to face, so does the heart of man to man.

This may appear a very simple principle, and one which Burns had little merit in discovering. True, the discovery is easy enough: but the practical appliance is not easy; is indeed the fundamental difficulty which all poets have to strive with, and which scarcely one in the hundred ever fairly sur-

mounts. A head too dull to discriminate the true from the false; a heart too dull to love the one at all risks, and to hate the other in spite of all temptations, are alike fatal to a writer. With either, or, as more commonly happens, with both, of these deficiencies, combine a love of distinction, a wish to be original, which is seldom wanting, and we have Affectation, the bane of literature, as Cant, its elder brother, is of morals. How often does the one and the other front us, in poetry, as in life! Great poets themselves are not always free of this vice; nay, it is precisely on a certain sort and degree of greatness that it is most commonly ingrafted. A strong effort after excellence will sometimes solace itself with a mere shadow of success; he who has much to unfold, will sometimes unfold it imperfectly. Byron, for instance, was no common man: yet if we examine his poetry with this view, we shall find it far enough from faultless. Generally speaking, we should say that it is not true. He refreshes us, not with the divine fountain, but too often with vulgar strong waters, stimulating indeed to the taste, but soon ending in dislike, or even nausea. Are his Harolds and Giaours, we would ask, real men; we mean, poetically consistent and conceivable men? Do not these characters, does not the character of their author, which more or less shines through them all, rather appear a thing put on for the occasion; no natural or possible mode of being, but something intended to look much grander than nature? Surely, all these stormful agonies, this volcanic heroism, superhuman contempt and moody desperation, with so much scowling, and teeth-gnashing, and other sulphurous humour, is more like the brawling of a player in some paltry tragedy, which is to last three hours, than the bearing of a man in the business of life, which is to last threescore and ten years. To our minds, there is a taint of this sort, something which we should call theatrical, false, affected, in every one of these otherwise so powerful pieces. Perhaps *Don Juan*, especially the latter parts of it, is the only thing approaching to a *sincere* work, he ever wrote; the only work where he showed himself in any measure, as he was; and seemed so intent on his subject as, for moments, to forget himself. Yet Byron hated this

vice; we believe, heartily detested it: nay, he had declared formal war against it in words. So difficult is it even for the strongest to make this primary attainment, which might seem the simplest of all: to *read its own consciousness without mistakes*, without errors involuntary or wilful! We recollect no poet of Burns's susceptibility who comes before us from the first, and abides with us to the last, with such a total want of affectation. He is an honest man, and an honest writer. In his successes and his failures, in his greatness and his littleness, he is ever clear, simple, true, and glitters with no lustre but his own. We reckon this to be a great virtue; to be, in fact, the root of most other virtues literary, as well as moral.

Here, however, let us say, it is to the Poetry of Burns that we now allude; to those writings which he had time to meditate, and where no special reason existed to warp his critical feeling, or obstruct his endeavour to fulfil it. Certain of his Letters, and other fractions of prose composition, by no means deserve this praise. Here, doubtless, there is not the same natural truth of style; but on the contrary, something not only stiff, but strained and twisted; a certain high-flown inflated tone; the stilting emphasis of which contrasts ill with the firmness and rugged simplicity of even his poorest verses. Thus no man, it would appear, is altogether unaffected. Does not Shakspeare himself sometimes premeditate the sheerest bombast! But even with regard to these Letters of Burns, it is but fair to state that he had two excuses. The first was his comparative deficiency in language. Burns, though for most part he writes with singular force, and even gracefulness, is not master of English prose, as he is of Scottish verse; not master of it, we mean, in proportion to the depth and vehemence of his matter. These Letters strike us as the effort of a man to express something which he has no organ fit for expressing. But a second and weightier excuse is to be found in the peculiarity of Burns's social rank. His correspondents are often men whose relation to him he has never accurately ascertained; whom therefore he is either forearming himself against, or else unconsciously flattering, by adopting the style he thinks will please them. At all events, we should remem-

ber that these faults, even in his Letters, are not the rule, but the exception. Whenever he writes, as one would ever wish to do, to trusted friends and on real interests, his style becomes simple, vigorous, expressive, sometimes even beautiful. His letters to Mrs. Dunlop are uniformly excellent.

But we return to his Poetry. In addition to its Sincerity, it has another peculiar merit, which indeed is but a mode, or perhaps a means, of the foregoing: this displays itself in his choice of subjects; or rather in his indifference as to subjects, and the power he has of making all subjects interesting. The ordinary poet, like the ordinary man, is forever seeking in external circumstances the help which can be found only in himself. In what is familiar and near at hand, he discerns no form or comeliness: home is not poetical but prosaic; it is in some past, distant, conventional heroic world, that poetry resides; were he there and not here, were he thus and not so, it would be well with him. Hence our innumerable host of rose-coloured Novels and iron-mailed Epics, with their locality not on the Earth, but somewhere nearer to the Moon. Hence our Virgins of the Sun, and our Knights of the Cross, malicious Saracens in turbans, and copper-coloured Chiefs in wampum, and so many other truculent figures from the heroic times or the heroic climates, who on all hands swarm in our poetry. Peace be with them! But yet, as a great moralist proposed preaching to the men of this century, so would we fain preach to the poets, 'a sermon on the duty of staying at home.' Let them be sure that heroic ages and heroic climates can do little for them. That form of life has attraction for us, less because it is better or nobler than our own, than simply because it is different; and even this attraction must be of the most transient sort. For will not our own age, one day, be an ancient one; and have as quaint a costume as the rest; not contrasted with the rest, therefore, but ranked along with them in respect of quaintness? Does Homer interest us now, because he wrote of what passed beyond his native Greece, and two centuries before he was born; or because he wrote what passed in God's world, and in the heart of man, which is the same after thirty centuries? Let our poets look to

this: is their feeling really finer, truer, and their vision deeper than that of other men,—they have nothing to fear, even from the humblest subject; is it not so,—they have nothing to hope, but an ephemeral favour, even from the highest.

The poet, we imagine, can never have far to seek for a subject: the elements of his art are in him, and around him on every hand; for him the Ideal world is not remote from the Actual, but under it and within it: nay, he is a poet, precisely because he can discern it there. Wherever there is a sky above him, and a world around him, the poet is in his place; for here too is man's existence, with its infinite longings and small acquirings; its ever-thwarted, ever-renewed endeavours; its unspeakable aspirations, its fears and hopes that wander through Eternity; and all the mystery of brightness and of gloom that it was ever made of, in any age or climate, since man first began to live. Is there not the fifth act of a Tragedy in every death-bed, though it were a peasant's, and a bed of heath? And are wooings and weddings obsolete, that there can be Comedy no longer? Or are men suddenly grown wise, that Laughter must no longer shake his sides, but be cheated of his farce? Man's life and nature is, as it was, and as it will ever be. But the poet must have an eye to read these things, and a heart to understand them; or they come and pass away before him in vain. He is a *vates*, a seer; a gift of vision has been given him. Has life no meanings for him, which another cannot equally decipher; then he is no poet, and Delphi itself will not make him one.

In this respect, Burns, though not perhaps absolutely a great poet, better manifests his capability, better proves the truth of his genius, than if he had, by his own strength, kept the whole Minerva Press going, to the end of his literary course. He shows himself at least a poet of Nature's own making; and Nature, after all, is still the grand agent in making poets. We often hear of this and the other external condition being requisite for the existence of a poet. Sometimes it is a certain sort of training; he must have studied certain things, studied for instance 'the elder dramatists,' and so learned a poetic language; as if poetry lay in the tongue, not in

the heart. At other times we are told, he must be bred in a certain rank, and must be on a confidential footing with the higher classes; because above all things, he must see the world. As to seeing the world, we apprehend this will cause him little difficulty, if he have but eyesight to see it with. Without eyesight, indeed, the task might be hard. The blind or the purblind man 'travels from Dan to Beersheba, and finds it all barren.' But happily every poet is born *in* the world; and sees it, with or against his will, every day and every hour he lives. The mysterious workmanship of man's heart, the true light and the inscrutable darkness of man's destiny, reveal themselves not only in capital cities and crowded saloons, but in every hut and hamlet where men have their abode. Nay, do not the elements of all human virtues and all human vices; the passions at once of a Borgia and of a Luther, lie written, in stronger or fainter lines, in the consciousness of every individual bosom, that has practised honest self-examination? Truly, this same world may be seen in Mossgiel and Tarbolton, if we look well, as clearly as it ever came to light in Crockford's, or the Tuileries itself.

But sometimes still harder requisitions are laid on the poor aspirant to poetry; for it is hinted that he should have *been born* two centuries ago; inasmuch as poetry, about that date, vanished from the earth, and became no longer attainable by men! Such cobweb speculations have, now and then, overhung the field of literature; but they obstruct not the growth of any plant there: the Shakspeare or the Burns, unconsciously and merely as he walks onward, silently brushes them away. Is not every genius an impossibility till he appear? Why do we call him new and original, if *we* saw where his marble was lying, and what fabric he could rear from it? It is not the material but the workman that is wanting. It is not the dark *place* that hinders, but the dim *eye*. A Scottish peasant's life was the meanest and rudest of all lives, till Burns became a poet in it, and a poet of it; found it a *man's* life, and therefore significant to men. A thousand battle-fields remain unsung; but the *Wounded Hare* has not perished without its memorial; a balm of mercy yet breathes on us

from its dumb agonies, because a poet was there. Our *Halloween* had passed and repassed, in rude awe and laughter, since the era of the Druids; but no Theocritus, till Burns, discerned in it the materials of a Scottish Idyl: neither was the *Holy Fair* any *Council of Trent*, or Roman *Jubilee;* but nevertheless, *Superstition* and *Hypocrisy* and *Fun* having been propitious to him, in this man's hand it became a poem, instinct with satire and genuine comic life. Let but the true poet be given us, we repeat it, place him where and how you will, and true poetry will not be wanting.

Independently of the essential gift of poetic feeling, as we have now attempted to describe it, a certain rugged sterling worth pervades whatever Burns has written: a virtue, as of green fields and mountain breezes, dwells in his poetry; it is redolent of natural life and hardy natural men. There is a decisive strength in him, and yet a sweet native gracefulness: he is tender, he is vehement, yet without constraint or too visible effort; he melts the heart, or inflames it, with a power which seems habitual and familiar to him. We see that in this man there was the gentleness, the trembling pity of a woman, with the deep earnestness, the force and passionate ardour of a hero. Tears lie in him, and consuming fire; as lightning lurks in the drops of the summer cloud. He has a resonance in his bosom for every note of human feeling; the high and the low, the sad, the ludicrous, the joyful, are welcome in their turns to his 'lightly-moved and all-conceiving spirit.' And observe with what a fierce prompt force he grasps his subject, be it what it may! How he fixes, as it were, the full image of the matter in his eye; full and clear in every lineament; and catches the real type and essence of it, amid a thousand accidents and superficial circumstances, no one of which misleads him! Is it of reason; some truth to be discovered? No sophistry, no vain surface-logic detains him; quick, resolute, unerring, he pierces through into the marrow of the question; and speaks his verdict with an emphasis that cannot be forgotten. Is it of description; some visual object to be represented? No poet of any age or nation is more graphic than Burns: the characteristic features

disclose themselves to him at a glance; three lines from his hand, and we have a likeness. And, in that rough dialect, in that rude, often awkward metre, so clear and definite a likeness! It seems a draughtsman working with a burnt stick; and yet the burin of a Retzsch is not more expressive or exact.

Of this last excellence, the plainest and most comprehensive of all, being indeed the root and foundation of *every* sort of talent, poetical or intellectual, we could produce innumerable instances from the writings of Burns. Take these glimpses of a snow-storm from his *Winter Night* (the italics are ours):

> When biting Boreas, fell and doure,
> *Sharp shivers* thro' the leafless bow'r,
> And Phœbus *gies a short-liv'd glowr*
> *Far south the lift,*
> *Dim dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r*
> *Or whirling drift:*
>
> 'Ae night the storm the steeples rock'd,
> Poor labour sweet in sleep was lock'd,
> While burns *wi' snawy wreeths upchock'd,*
> *Wild-eddying whirl,*
> Or thro' the mining outlet bock'd,
> Down headlong hurl.

Are there not 'descriptive touches' here? The describer *saw* this thing; the essential feature and true likeness of every circumstance in it; saw, and not with the eye only. 'Poor labour locked in sweet sleep;' the dead stillness of man, unconscious, vanquished, yet not unprotected, while such strife of the material elements rages, and seems to reign supreme in loneliness: this is of the heart as well as of the eye!—Look also at his image of a thaw, and prophesied fall of the *Auld Brig:*

> When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains
> Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;
> When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
> Or stately Lugar's *mossy* fountains *boil,*
> Or where the Greenock winds his *moorland* course,
> Or haunted Garpel [1] draws his feeble source,

[1] *Fabulosus* Hydaspes.

Arous'd by blust'ring winds and *spotting* thowes
In mony a torrent down his snaw-broo rowes;
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat,
Sweeps dams and mills and brigs a' to the gate;
And from Glenbuck down to the Rottonkey,
Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd *tumbling* sea;
Then down ye'll hurl, Deil nor ye never rise!
And *dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies.*

The last line is in itself a Poussin-picture of that Deluge! The welkin has, as it were, bent down with its weight; the 'gumlie jaups' and the 'pouring skies' are mingled together; it is a world of rain and ruin.—In respect of mere clearness and minute fidelity, the *Farmer's* commendation of his *Auld Mare*, in plough or in cart, may vie with Homer's Smithy of the Cyclops, or yoking of Priam's Chariot. Nor have we forgotten stout *Burn-the-wind* and his brawny customers, inspired by *Scotch Drink:* but it is needless to multiply examples. One other trait of a much finer sort we select from multitudes of such among his *Songs*. It gives, in a single line, to the saddest feeling the saddest environment and local habitation:

The pale Moon is setting beyond the white wave,
And Time is setting wi' me, O;
Farewell, false friends! false lover, farewell!
I'll nae mair trouble them nor thee, O.

This clearness of sight we have called the foundation of all talent; for in fact, unless we *see* our object, how shall we know how to place or prize it, in our understanding, our imagination, our affections? Yet it is not in itself, perhaps, a very high excellence; but capable of being united indifferently with the strongest, or with ordinary powers. Homer surpasses all men in this quality: but strangely enough, at no great distance below him are Richardson and Defoe. It belongs, in truth, to what is called a lively mind; and gives no sure indication of the higher endowments that may exist along with it. In all the three cases we have mentioned, it is combined with great garrulity; their descriptions are de-

tailed, ample and lovingly exact; Homer's fire bursts through from time to time, as if by accident; but Defoe and Richardson have no fire. Burns, again, is not more distinguished by the clearness than by the impetuous force of his conceptions. Of the strength, the piercing emphasis with which he thought, his emphasis of expression may give a humble but the readiest proof. Who ever uttered sharper sayings than his; words more memorable, now by their burning vehemence, now by their cool vigour and laconic pith? A single phrase depicts a whole subject, a whole scene. We hear of 'a gentleman that derived his patent of nobility direct from Almighty God.' Our Scottish forefathers in the battle-field struggled forward '*red-wat-shod:*' in this one word, a full vision of horror and carnage, perhaps too frightfully accurate for Art!

In fact, one of the leading features in the mind of Burns is this vigour of his strictly intellectual perceptions. A resolute force is ever visible in his judgments, and in his feelings and volitions. Professor Stewart says of him, with some surprise: 'All the faculties of Burns's mind were, as far as I 'could judge, equally vigorous; and his predilection for poetry 'was rather the result of his own enthusiastic and impassioned 'temper, than of a genius exclusively adapted to that species 'of composition. From his conversation I should have pro-'nounced him to be fitted to excel in whatever walk of ambi-'tion he had chosen to exert his abilities.' But this, if we mistake not, is at all times the very essence of a truly poetical endowment. Poetry, except in such cases as that of Keats, where the whole consists in a weak-eyed maudlin sensibility, and a certain vague random tunefulness of nature, is no separate faculty, no organ which can be superadded to the rest, or disjoined from them; but rather the result of their general harmony and completion. The feelings, the gifts that exist in the Poet, are those that exist, with more or less development, in every human soul: the imagination, which shudders at the Hell of Dante, is the same faculty, weaker in degree, which called that picture into being. How does the Poet speak to men, with power, but by being still more a man than they? Shakspeare, it has been well observed, in the

planning and completing of his tragedies, has shown an Understanding, were it nothing more, which might have governed states, or indited a *Novum Organum*. What Burns's force of understanding may have been, we have less means of judging: it had to dwell among the humblest objects; never saw Philosophy; never rose, except by natural effort and for short intervals, into the region of great ideas. Nevertheless, sufficient indication, if no proof sufficient, remains for us in his works: we discern the brawny movements of a gigantic though untutored strength; and can understand how, in conversation, his quick sure insight into men and things may, as much as aught else about him, have amazed the best thinkers of his time and country.

But, unless we mistake, the intellectual gift of Burns is fine as well as strong. The more delicate relations of things could not well have escaped his eye, for they were intimately present to his heart. The logic of the senate and the forum is indispensable, but not all-sufficient; nay, perhaps the highest Truth is that which will the most certainly elude it. For this logic works by words, and 'the highest,' it has been said, 'cannot be expressed in words.' We are not without tokens of an openness for this higher truth also, of a keen though uncultivated sense for it, having existed in Burns. Mr. Stewart, it will be remembered, 'wonders,' in the passage above quoted, that Burns had formed some distinct conception of the 'doctrine of association.' We rather think that far subtler things than the doctrine of association had from of old been familiar to him. Here for instance:

'We know nothing,' thus writes he, 'or next to nothing, of the structure of our souls, so we cannot account for those seeming caprices in them, that one should be particularly pleased with this thing, or struck with that, which, on minds of a different cast, makes no extraordinary impression. I have some favourite flowers in spring, among which are the mountain-daisy, the harebell, the foxglove, the wild-brier rose, the budding birch, and the hoary hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never hear the loud solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing

cadence of a troop of gray plover in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can this be owing? Are we a piece of machinery, which, like the Æolian harp, passive, takes the impression of the passing accident; or do these workings argue something within us above the trodden clod? I own myself partial to such proofs of those awful and important realities: a God that made all things, man's immaterial and immortal nature, and a world of weal or woe beyond death and the grave.'

Force and fineness of understanding are often spoken of as something different from general force and fineness of nature, as something partly independent of them. The necessities of language so require it; but in truth these qualities are not distinct and independent: except in special cases, and from special causes, they ever go together. A man of strong understanding is generally a man of strong character; neither is delicacy in the one kind often divided from delicacy in the other. No one, at all events, is ignorant that in the Poetry of Burns, keenness of insight keeps pace with keenness of feeling; that his *light* is not more pervading than his *warmth*. He is a man of the most impassioned temper; with passions not strong only, but noble, and of the sort in which great virtues and great poems take their rise. It is reverence, it is love towards all Nature that inspires him, that opens his eyes to its beauty, and makes heart and voice eloquent in its praise. There is a true old saying, that 'Love furthers knowledge:' but above all, it is the living essence of that knowledge which makes poets; the first principle of its existence, increase, activity. Of Burns's fervid affection, his generous all-embracing Love, we have spoken already, as of the grand distinction of his nature, seen equally in word and deed, in his Life and his Writings. It were easy to multiply examples. Not man only, but all that environs man in the material and moral universe, is lovely in his sight: 'the hoary hawthorn,' the 'troop of gray plover,' the 'solitary curlew,' all are dear to him; all live in this Earth along with him, and to all he is knit as in mysterious brotherhood. How touching

is it, for instance, that, amidst the gloom of personal misery, brooding over the wintry desolation without him and within him, he thinks of the 'ourie cattle' and 'silly sheep,' and their sufferings in the pitiless storm!

I thought me on the ourie cattle,
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
O' wintry war;
Or thro' the drift, deep-lairing, sprattle,
Beneath a scaur.
Ilk happy bird, wee helpless thing,
That in the merry months o' spring
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee?
Where wilt thou cow'r thy chittering wing,
And close thy ee?

The tenant of the mean hut, with its 'ragged roof and chinky wall,' has a heart to pity even these! This is worth several homilies on Mercy; for it is the voice of Mercy herself. Burns, indeed, lives in sympathy; his soul rushes forth into all realms of being; nothing that has existence can be indifferent to him. The very Devil he cannot hate with right orthodoxy:

But fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben;
O wad ye tak a thought and men'!
Ye aiblins might,—I dinna ken,—
Still hae a stake;
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
Even for your sake!

"*He* is the father of curses and lies," said Dr. Slop; "and is cursed and damned already."—"I am sorry for it," quoth my uncle Toby!—A Poet without Love were a physical and metaphysical impossibility.

But has it not been said in contradiction to this principle, that 'Indignation makes verses'? It has been so said, and is true enough: but the contradiction is apparent, not real. The Indignation which makes verses is, properly speaking, an inverted Love; the love of some right, some worth, some goodness, belonging to ourselves or others, which has been injured,

and which this tempestuous feeling issues forth to defend and avenge. No selfish fury of heart, existing there as a primary feeling, and without its opposite, ever produced much Poetry: otherwise, we suppose, the Tiger were the most musical of all our choristers. Johnson said, he loved a good hater; by which he must have meant, not so much one that hated violently, as one that hated wisely; hated baseness from love of nobleness. However, in spite of Johnson's paradox, tolerable enough for once in speech, but which need not have been so often adopted in print since then, we rather believe that good men deal sparingly in hatred, either wise or unwise: nay that a 'good' hater is still a desideratum in this world. The Devil, at least, who passes for the chief and best of that class, is said to be nowise an amiable character.

Of the verses which Indignation makes, Burns has also given us specimens: and among the best that were ever given. Who will forget his '*Dweller in yon Dungeon dark;*' a piece that might have been chaunted by the Furies of Æschylus? The secrets of the infernal Pit are laid bare; a boundless baleful 'darkness visible;' and streaks of hell-fire quivering madly in its black haggard bosom!

> Dweller in yon Dungeon dark,
> Hangman of Creation, mark!
> Who in widow's weeds appears,
> Laden with unhonoured years,
> Noosing with care a bursting purse,
> Baited with many a deadly curse?

Why should we speak of *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled*, since all know of it, from the king to the meanest of his subjects? This dithyrambic was composed on horseback; in riding in the middle of tempests, over the wildest Galloway moor, in company with a Mr. Syme, who, observing the poet's looks, forebore to speak,—judiciously enough, for a man composing *Bruce's Address* might be unsafe to trifle with. Doubtless this stern hymn was singing itself, as he formed it, through the soul of Burns: but to the external ear, it should be sung with the throat of the whirlwind. So long as there is warm blood in the heart of Scotchman or man, it will move

in fierce thrills under this war-ode ; the best, we believe, that was ever written by any pen.

Another wild stormful Song, that dwells in our ear and mind with a strange tenacity, is *Macpherson's Farewell.* Perhaps there is something in the tradition itself that coöperates. For was not this grim Celt, this shaggy Northland Cacus, that 'lived a life of sturt and strife, and died by treacherie,' was not he too one of the Nimrods and Napoleons of the earth, in the arena of his own remote misty glens, for want of a clearer and wider one ? Nay, was there not a touch of grace given him ? A fibre of love and softness, of poetry itself, must have lived in his savage heart : for he composed that air the night before his execution ; on the wings of that poor melody, his better soul would soar away above oblivion, pain and all the ignominy and despair, which, like an avalanche, was hurling him to the abyss ! Here also, as at Thebes, and in Pelops' line, was material Fate matched against man's Free-will ; matched in bitterest though obscure duel ; and the ethereal soul sank not, even in its blindness, without a cry which has survived it. But who, except Burns, could have given words to such a soul ; words that we never listen to without a strange half-barbarous, half-poetic fellow-feeling ?

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;
He play'd a spring, and danced it round,
Below the gallows-tree.

Under a lighter disguise, the same principle of Love, which we have recognised as the great characteristic of Burns, and of all true poets, occasionally manifests itself in the shape of Humour. Everywhere, indeed, in his sunny moods, a full buoyant flood of mirth rolls through the mind of Burns ; he rises to the high, and stoops to the low, and is brother and playmate to all Nature. We speak not of his bold and often irresistible faculty of caricature ; for this is Drollery rather than Humour : but a much tenderer sportfulness dwells in him ; and comes forth here and there, in evanescent and beautiful touches ; as in his *Address to the Mouse,* or the *Farmer's Mare,* or in his *Elegy on poor Mailie,* which last may be reck-

oned his happiest effort of this kind. In these pieces there are traits of a Humour as fine as that of Sterne ; yet altogether different, original, peculiar,—the Humour of Burns.

Of the tenderness, the playful pathos, and many other kindred qualities of Burns's Poetry, much more might be said ; but now, with these poor outlines of a sketch, we must prepare to quit this part of our subject. To speak of his individual Writings, adequately and with any detail, would lead us far beyond our limits. As already hinted, we can look on but few of these pieces as, in strict critical language, deserving the name of Poems : they are rhymed eloquence, rhymed pathos, rhymed sense ; yet seldom essentially melodious, aërial, poetical. *Tam o' Shanter* itself, which enjoys so high a favour, does not appear to us, at all decisively, to come under this last category. It is not so much a poem, as a piece of sparkling rhetoric ; the heart and body of the story still lies hard and dead. He has not gone back, much less carried us back, into that dark, earnest, wondering age, when the tradition was believed, and when it took its rise ; he does not attempt, by any new-modelling of his supernatural ware, to strike anew that deep mysterious chord of human nature, which once responded to such things ; and which lives in us too, and will forever live, though silent now, or vibrating with far other notes, and to far different issues. Our German readers will understand us, when we say, that he is not the Tieck but the Musäus of this tale. Externally it is all green and living ; yet look closer, it is no firm growth, but only ivy on a rock. The piece does not properly cohere : the strange chasm which yawns in our incredulous imaginations between the Ayr public-house and the gate of Tophet, is nowhere bridged over, nay the idea of such a bridge is laughed at ; and thus the Tragedy of the adventure becomes a mere drunken phantasmagoria, or many-coloured spectrum painted on ale-vapours, and the Farce alone has any reality. We do not say that Burns should have made much more of this tradition ; we rather think that, for strictly poetical purposes, not much *was* to be made of it. Neither are we blind to the deep, varied, genial power displayed in what he has actually accomplished ;

but we find far more 'Shakspearean' qualities, as these of *Tam o' Shanter* have been fondly named, in many of his other pieces; nay, we incline to believe, that this latter might have been written, all but quite as well, by a man who, in place of genius, had only possessed talent.

Perhaps we may venture to say, that the most strictly poetical of all his 'poems' is one which does not appear in Currie's Edition; but has been often printed before and since, under the humble title of *The Jolly Beggars*. The subject truly is among the lowest in Nature; but it only the more shows our Poet's gift in raising it into the domain of Art. To our minds, this piece seems thoroughly compacted; melted together, refined; and poured forth in one flood of true *liquid* harmony. It is light, airy, soft of movement; yet sharp and precise in its details; every face is a portrait: that *raucle carlin*, that *wee Apollo*, that *Son of Mars*, are Scottish, yet ideal; the scene is at once a dream, and the very Ragcastle of 'Poosie-Nansie.' Farther, it seems in a considerable degree complete, a real self-supporting Whole, which is the highest merit in a poem. The blanket of the Night is drawn asunder for a moment; in full, ruddy, flaming light, these rough tatterdemalions are seen in their boisterous revel; for the strong pulse of Life vindicates its right to gladness even here; and when the curtain closes, we prolong the action, without effort; the next day as the last, our *Caird* and our *Ballad-monger* are singing and soldering; their 'brats and callets' are hawking, begging cheating; and some other night, in new combinations, they will wring from Fate another hour of wassail and good cheer. Apart from the universal sympathy with man which this again bespeaks in Burns, a genuine inspiration and no inconsiderable technical talent are manifested here. There is the fidelity, humour, warm life and accurate painting and grouping of some Teniers, for whom hostlers and carousing peasants are not without significance. It would be strange, doubtless, to call this the best of Burns's writings: we mean to say only, that it seems to us the most perfect of its kind, as a piece of poetical composition, strictly so called. In the *Beggars' Opera*, in the *Beggars' Bush*, as other critics have already remarked,

there is nothing which, in real poetic vigour, equals this *Cantata;* nothing, as we think, which comes within many degrees of it.

But by far the most finished, complete and truly inspired pieces of Burns are, without dispute, to be found among his *Songs.* It is here that, although through a small aperture, his light shines with least obstruction; in its highest beauty and pure sunny clearness. The reason may be, that Song is a brief simple species of composition; and requires nothing so much for its perfection, as genuine poetic feeling, genuine music of heart. Yet the Song has its rules equally with the Tragedy; rules which in most cases are poorly fulfilled, in many cases are not so much as felt. We might write a long essay on the Songs of Burns; which we reckon by far the best that Britain has yet produced: for, indeed, since the era of Queen Elizabeth, we know not that, by any other hand, aught truly worth attention has been accomplished in this department. True, we have songs enough 'by persons of quality;' we have tawdry, hollow, wine-bred madrigals; many a rhymed speech 'in the flowing and watery vein of Ossorius the Portugal Bishop,' rich in sonorous words, and, for moral, dashed perhaps with some tint of a sentimental sensuality; all which many persons cease not from endeavouring to sing; though for most part, we fear, the music is but from the throat outwards, or at best from some region far enough short of the *Soul;* not in which, but in a certain inane Limbo of the Fancy, or even in some vaporous debatable-land on the outskirts of the Nervous System, most of such madrigals and rhymed speeches seem to have originated. With the Songs of Burns we must not name these things. Independently of the clear, manly, heartfelt sentiment that ever pervades *his* poetry, his Songs are honest in another point of view; in form, as well as in spirit. They do not *affect* to be set to music, but they actually and in themselves are music; they have received their life, and fashioned themselves together, in the medium of Harmony, as Venus rose from the bosom of the sea. The story, the feeling, is not detailed, but suggested; not *said,* or spouted, in rhetorical completeness and coherence;

but *sung*, in fitful gushes, in glowing hints, in fantastic breaks, in *warblings* not of the voice only, but of the whole mind. We consider this to be the essence of a song; and that no songs since the little careless catches, and, as it were, drops of song, which Shakspeare has here and there sprinkled over his Plays, fulfil this condition in nearly the same degree as most of Burns's do. Such grace and truth of external movement, too, pre-supposes in general a corresponding force and truth of sentiment and inward meaning. The Songs of Burns are not more perfect in the former quality than in the latter. With what tenderness he sings, yet with what vehemence and entireness! There is a piercing wail in his sorrow, the purest rapture in his joy; he burns with the sternest ire, or laughs with the loudest or sliest mirth; and yet he is sweet and soft, 'sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet, and soft as their parting tear!' If we farther take into account the immense variety of his subjects; how, from the loud flowing revel in *Willie brew'd a Peck o' Maut*, to the still, rapt enthusiasm of sadness for *Mary in Heaven;* from the glad kind greeting of *Auld Langsyne*, or the comic archness of *Duncan Gray*, to the fire-eyed fury of *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled*, he has found a tone and words for every mood of man's heart,—it will seem a small praise if we rank him as the first of all our Song-writers; for we know not where to fine one worthy of being second to him.

It is on his Songs, as we believe, that Burns's chief influence as an author will ultimately be found to depend: nor, if our Fletcher's aphorism is true, shall we account this a small influence. 'Let me make the songs of a people,' said he, 'and you shall make its laws.' Surely, if ever any Poet might have equalled himself with Legislators on this ground, it was Burns. His Songs are already part of the mother-tongue, not of Scotland only but of Britain, and of the millions that in all ends of the earth speak a British language. In hut and hall, as the heart unfolds itself in many-coloured joy and woe of existence, the *name*, the *voice* of that joy and that woe, is the name and voice which Burns has given them. Strictly speaking, perhaps no British man has so deeply affected the thoughts and

feelings of so many men, as this solitary and altogether private individual, with means apparently the humblest.

In another point of view, moreover, we incline to think that Burns's influence may have been considerable: we mean, as exerted specially on the Literature of his country, at least on the Literature of Scotland. Among the great changes which British, particularly Scottish literature, has undergone since that period, one of the greatest will be found to consist in its remarkable increase of nationality. Even the English writers, most popular in Burns's time, were little distinguished for their literary patriotism, in this its best sense. A certain attenuated cosmopolitanism had, in good measure, taken place of the old insular home-feeling; literature was, as it were, without any local environment; was not nourished by the affections which spring from a native soil. Our Grays and Glovers seemed to write almost as if *in vacuo;* the thing written bears no mark of place; it is not written so much for Englishmen, as for men; or rather, which is the inevitable result of this, for certain Generalisations which philosophy termed men. Goldsmith is an exception: not so Johnson; the scene of his *Rambler* is little more English than that of his *Rasselas.* But if such was, in some degree, the case with England, it was, in the highest degree, the case with Scotland. In fact, our Scottish literature had, at that period, a very singular aspect; unexampled, so far as we know, except perhaps at Geneva, where the same state of matters appears still to continue. For a long period after Scotland became British, we had no literature: at the date when Addison and Steele were writing their *Spectators,* our good John Boston was writing, with the noblest intent, but alike in defiance of grammar and philosophy, his *Fourfold State of Man.* Then came the schisms in our National Church, and the fiercer schisms in our Body Politic: Theologic ink, and Jacobite blood, with gall enough in both cases, seemed to have blotted out the intellect of the country; however, it was only obscured, not obliterated. Lord Kames made nearly the first attempt at writing English; and ere long, Hume, Robertson, Smith, and a whole host of followers, attracted hither the eyes of all Europe. And yet in this brill-

iant resuscitation of our 'fervid genius,' there was nothing truly Scottish, nothing indigenous; except, perhaps, the natural impetuosity of intellect, which we sometimes claim, and are sometimes upbraided with, as a characteristic of our nation. It is curious to remark that Scotland, so full of writers, had no Scottish culture, nor indeed any English; our culture was almost exclusively French. It was by studying Racine and Voltaire, Batteux and Boileau, that Kames had trained himself to be a critic and philosopher; it was the light of Montesquieu and Mably that guided Robertson in his political speculations; Quesnay's lamp that kindled the lamp of Adam Smith. Hume was too rich a man to borrow; and perhaps he reacted on the French more than he was acted on by them: but neither had he aught to do with Scotland; Edinburgh, equally with La Flèche, was but the lodging and laboratory, in which he not so much morally *lived*, as metaphysically *investigated*. Never, perhaps, was there a class of writers so clear and well-ordered, yet so totally destitute, to all appearance, of any patriotic affection, nay of any human affection whatever. The French wits of the period were as unpatriotic: but their general deficiency in moral principle, not to say their avowed sensuality and unbelief in all virtue, strictly so called, render this accountable enough. We hope, there is a patriotism founded on something better than prejudice; that our country may be dear to us, without injury to our philosophy; that in loving and justly prizing all other lands, we may prize justly, and yet love before all others, our own stern Motherland, and the venerable Structure of social and moral Life, which Mind has through long ages been building up for us there. Surely there is nourishment for the better part of man's heart in all this: surely the roots, that have fixed themselves in the very core of man's being, may be so cultivated as to grow up not into briers, but into roses, in the field of his life! Our Scottish sages have no such propensities: the field of their life shows neither briers nor roses; but only a flat, continuous thrashing-floor for Logic, whereon all questions, from the 'Doctrine of Rent' to the 'Natural History of Religion,' are thrashed and sifted with the same mechanical impartiality!

With Sir Walter Scott at the head of our literature, it cannot be denied that much of this evil is past, or rapidly passing away: our chief literary men, whatever other faults they may have, no longer live among us like a French Colony, or some knot of Propaganda Missionaries; but like natural-born subjects of the soil, partaking and sympathising in all our attachments, humours and habits. Our literature no longer grows in water but in mould, and with the true racy virtues of the soil and climate. How much of this change may be due to Burns, or to any other individual, it might be difficult to estimate. Direct literary imitation of Burns was not to be looked for. But his example, in the fearless adoption of domestic subjects, could not but operate from afar; and certainly in no heart did the love of country ever burn with a warmer glow than in that of Burns: 'a tide of Scottish prejudice,' as he modestly calls this deep and generous feeling, 'had been poured along his veins; and he felt that 'it would boil there till the flood-gates shut in eternal rest.' It seemed to him, as if *he* could do so little for his country, and yet would so gladly have done all. One small province stood open for him,—that of Scottish Song; and how eagerly he entered on it, how devotedly he laboured there! In his toilsome journeyings, this object never quits him; it is the little happy-valley of his careworn heart. In the gloom of his own affliction, he eagerly searches after some lonely brother of the muse, and rejoices to snatch one other name from the oblivion that was covering it! These were early feelings, and they abode with him to the end:

——A wish (I mind its power),
A wish, that to my latest hour
Will strongly heave my breast,—
That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some useful plan or book could make,
Or sing a sang at least.
The rough bur Thistle spreading wide
Amang the bearded bear,
I turn'd my weeding-clips aside,
And spared the symbol dear.

But to leave the mere literary character of Burns, which has already detained us too long. Far more interesting than any of his written works, as it appears to us, are his acted ones: the Life he willed, and was fated, to lead among his fellow men. These Poems are but like little rhymed fragments scattered here and there in the grand unrhymed Romance of his earthly existence; and it is only when intercalated in this at their proper places, that they attain their full measure of significance. And this too, alas, was but a fragment! The plan of a mighty edifice had been sketched; some columns, porticos, firm masses of building, stand completed; the rest more or less clearly indicated; with many a far-stretching tendency, which only studious and friendly eyes can now trace towards the purposed termination. For the work is broken off in the middle, almost in the beginning; and rises among us, beautiful and sad, at once unfinished and a ruin! If charitable judgment was necessary in estimating his Poems, and justice required that the aim and the manifest power to fulfil it must often be accepted for the fulfilment; much more is this the case in regard to his Life, the sum and result of all his endeavours, where his difficulties came upon him not in detail only, but in mass; and so much has been left unaccomplished, nay was mistaken, and altogether marred.

Properly speaking, there is but one era in the life of Burns, and that the earliest. We have not youth and manhood, but only youth: for, to the end, we discern no decisive change in the complexion of his character; in his thirty-seventh year, he is still, as it were, in youth. With all that resoluteness of judgment, that penetrating insight, and singular maturity of intellectual power, exhibited in his writings, he never attains to any clearness regarding himself; to the last, he never ascertains his peculiar aim, even with such distinctness as is common among ordinary men; and therefore never can pursue it with that singleness of will, which insures success and some contentment to such men. To the last, he wavers between two purposes: glorying in his talent like a true poet, he yet cannot consent to make this his chief and

sole glory, and to follow it as the one thing needful, through poverty or riches, through good or evil report. Another far meaner ambition still cleaves to him; he must dream and struggle about a certain 'Rock of Independence;' which, natural and even admirable as it might be, was still but a warring with the world, on the comparatively insignificant ground of his being more completely or less completely supplied with money, than others; of his standing at a higher or at a lower altitude in general estimation than others. For the world still appears to him, as to the young, in borrowed colours: he expects from it what it cannot give to any man; seeks for contentment, not within himself, in action and wise effort, but from without, in the kindness of circumstances, in love, friendship, honour, pecuniary ease. He would be happy, not actively and in himself, but passively and from some ideal cornucopia of Enjoyments, not earned by his own labour, but showered on him by the beneficence of Destiny. Thus, like a young man, he cannot gird himself up for any worthy well-calculated goal, but swerves to and fro, between passionate hope and remorseful disappointment: rushing onwards with a deep tempestuous force, he surmounts or breaks asunder many a barrier; travels, nay advances far, but advancing only under uncertain guidance, is ever and anon turned from his path; and to the last, cannot reach the only true happiness of a man, that of clear decided Activity in the sphere for which, by nature and circumstances, he has been fitted and appointed.

We do not say these things in dispraise of Burns; nay, perhaps, they but interest us the more in his favour. This blessing is not given soonest to the best; but rather, it is often the greatest minds that are latest in obtaining it; for where most is to be developed, most time may be required to develop it. A complex condition had been assigned him from without; as complex a condition from within: no 'pre-established harmony' existed between the clay soil of Mossgiel and the empyrean soul of Robert Burns; it was not wonderful that the adjustment between them should have been long postponed, and his arm long cumbered, and his sight confused, in so vast

and discordant an economy as he had been appointed steward over. Byron was, at his death, but a year younger than Burns; and through life, as it might have appeared, far more simply situated: yet in him too, we can trace no such adjustment, no such moral manhood; but at best, and only a little before his end, the beginning of what seemed such.

By much the most striking incident in Burns's Life is his journey to Edinburgh; but perhaps a still more important one is his residence at Irvine, so early as in his twenty-third year. Hitherto his life had been poor and toilworn; but otherwise not ungenial, and, with all its distresses, by no means unhappy. In his parentage, deducting outward circumstances, he had every reason to reckon himself fortunate. His father was a man of thoughtful, intense, earnest character, as the best of our peasants are; valuing knowledge, possessing some, and, what is far better and rarer, open-minded for more: a man with a keen insight and devout heart; reverent towards God, friendly therefore at once, and fearless towards all that God has made: in one word, though but a hard-handed peasant, a complete and fully unfolded *Man*. Such a father is seldom found in any rank in society; and was worth descending far in society to seek. Unfortunately, he was very poor; had he been even a little richer, almost never so little, the whole might have issued far otherwise. Mighty events turn on a straw; the crossing of a brook decides the conquest of the world. Had this William Burns's small seven acres of nursery-ground anywise prospered, the boy Robert had been sent to school; had struggled forward, as so many weaker men do, to some university; come forth not as a rustic wonder, but as a regular well-trained intellectual workman, and changed the whole course of British Literature,—for it lay in him to have done this! But the nursery did not prosper; poverty sank his whole family below the help of even our cheap school-system: Burns remained a hard-worked ploughboy, and British literature took its own course. Nevertheless, even in this rugged scene there is much to nourish him. If he drudges, it is with his brother, and for his father and mother, whom he loves, and would fain

shield from want. Wisdom is not banished from their poor hearth, nor the balm of natural feeling: the solemn words, *Let us worship God,* are heard there from a 'priest-like father;' if threatenings of unjust men throw mother and children into tears, these are tears not of grief only, but of holiest affection; every heart in that humble group feels itself the closer knit to every other; in their hard warfare they are there together, a 'little band of brethren.' Neither are such tears, and the deep beauty that dwells in them, their only portion. Light visits the hearts as it does the eyes of all living: there is a force, too, in this youth, that enables him to trample on misfortune; nay, to bind it under his feet to make him sport. For a bold, warm, buoyant humour of character has been given him; and so the thick-coming shapes of evil are welcomed with a gay, friendly irony, and in their closest pressure he bates no jot of heart or hope. Vague yearnings of ambition fail not, as he grows up; dreamy fancies hang like cloud cities around him; the curtain of Existence is slowly rising in many-coloured splendour and gloom: and the auroral light of first love is gilding his horizon, and the music of song is on his path; and so he walks

> ——in glory and in joy,
> Behind his plough, upon the mountain side!

We ourselves know, from the best evidence, that up to this date Burns was happy; nay, that he was the gayest, brightest, most fantastic, fascinating being to be found in the world; more so even than he ever afterwards appeared. But now, at this early age, he quits the paternal roof; goes forth into looser, louder, more exciting society; and becomes initiated in those dissipations, those vices, which a certain class of philosophers have asserted to be a natural preparative for entering on active life; a kind of mud-bath, in which the youth is, as it were, necessitated to steep, and, we suppose, cleanse himself, before the real toga of Manhood can be laid on him. We shall not dispute much with this class of philosophers; we hope they are mistaken: for Sin and Remorse so easily beset us at all stages of life, and are always such indifferent com-

pany, that it seems hard we should, at any stage, be forced and fated not only to meet, but to yield to them, and even serve for a term in their leprous armada. We hope it is not so. Clear we are, at all events, it cannot be the training one receives in this Devil's-service, but only our determining to desert from it, that fits us for true manly Action. We become men, not after we have been dissipated, and disappointed in the chase of false pleasure; but after we have ascertained, in any way what impassable barriers hem us in through this life; how mad it is to hope for contentment to our infinite soul from the *gifts* of this extremely finite world; that a man must be sufficient for himself; and that for suffering and enduring there is no remedy but striving and doing. Manhood begins when we have in any way made truce with Necessity; begins even when we have surrendered to Necessity, as the most part only do; but begins joyfully and hopefully only when we have reconciled ourselves to Necessity; and thus, in reality, triumphed over it, and felt that in Necessity we are free. Surely, such lessons as this last, which, in one shape or other, is the grand lesson for every mortal man, are better learned from the lips of a devout mother, in the looks and actions of a devout father, while the heart is yet soft and pliant, than in collision with the sharp adamant of Fate, attracting us to shipwreck us, when the heart is grown hard, and may be broken before it will become contrite! Had Burns continued to learn this, as he was already learning it, in his father's cottage, he would have learned it fully, which he never did; and been saved many a lasting aberration, many a bitter hour and year of remorseful sorrow.

It seems to us another circumstance of fatal import in Burns's history, that at this time too he became involved in the religious quarrels of his district; that he was enlisted and feasted, as the fighting man of the New-Light Priesthood, in their highly unprofitable warfare. At the tables of these free-minded clergy, he learned much more than was needful for him. Such liberal ridicule of fanaticism awakened in his mind scruples about Religion itself; and a whole world of Doubts, which it required quite another set of conjurers than

these men to exorcise. We do not say that such an intellect as his could have escaped similar doubts, at some period of his history; or even that he could, at a later period, have come through them altogether victorious and unharmed: but it seems peculiarly unfortunate that this time, above all others, should have been fixed for the encounter. For now, with principles assailed by evil example from without, by 'passions raging like demons' from within, he had little need of sceptical misgivings to whisper treason in the heat of the battle, or to cut off his retreat if he were already defeated. He loses his feeling of innocence; his mind is at variance with itself; the old divinity no longer presides there; but wild Desires and wild Repentance alternately oppress him. Ere long, too, he has committed himself before the world; his character for sobriety, dear to a Scottish peasant as few corrupted worldlings can even conceive, is destroyed in the eyes of men; and his only refuge consists in trying to disbelieve his guiltiness, and is but a refuge of lies. The blackest desperation now gathers over him, broken only by red lightnings of remorse. The whole fabric of his life is blasted asunder; for now not only his character, but his personal liberty, is to be lost; men and Fortune are leagued for his hurt; 'hungry Ruin has him in the wind.' He sees no escape but the saddest of all: exile from his loved country, to a country in every sense inhospitable and abhorrent to him. While the 'gloomy night is gathering fast,' in mental storm and solitude, as well as in physical, he sings his wild farewell to Scotland:

> Farewell my friends, farewell my foes!
> My peace with these, my love with those:
> The bursting tears my heart declare,
> Adieu, my native banks of Ayr!

Light breaks suddenly in on him in floods; but still a false transitory light, and no real sunshine. He is invited to Edinburgh; hastens thither with anticipating heart; is welcomed as in a triumph, and with universal blandishment and acclamation; whatever is wisest, whatever is greatest or loveliest

there, gathers round him, to gaze on his face, to show him honour, sympathy, affection. Burns's appearance among the sages and nobles of Edinburgh must be regarded as one of the most singular phenomena in modern Literature; almost like the appearance of some Napoleon among the crowned sovereigns of modern Politics. For it is nowise as 'a mockery king,' set there by favour, transiently and for a purpose, that he will let himself be treated; still less is he a mad Rienzi, whose sudden elevation turns his too weak head: but he stands there on his own basis; cool, unastonished, holding his equal rank from Nature herself; putting forth no claim which there is not strength *in* him, as well as about him, to vindicate. Mr. Lockhart has some forcible observations on this point:

'It needs no effort of imagination,' says he, 'to conceive what the sensations of an isolated set of scholars (almost all either clergymen or professors) must have been, in the presence of this big-boned, black-browed, brawny stranger, with his great flashing eyes, who, having forced his way among them from the plough-tail at a single stride, manifested in the whole strain of his bearing and conversation a most thorough conviction, that in the society of the most eminent men of his nation, he was exactly where he was entitled to be; hardly deigned to flatter them by exhibiting even an occasional symptom of being flattered by their notice; by turns calmly measured himself against the most cultivated understandings of his time in discussion; overpowered the *bon-mots* of the most celebrated convivialists by broad floods of merriment, impregnated with all the burning life of genius; astounded bosoms habitually enveloped in the thrice-piled folds of social reserve, by compelling them to tremble,—nay, to tremble visibly,—beneath the fearless touch of natural pathos; and all this without indicating the smallest willingness to be ranked among those professional ministers of excitement, who are content to be paid in money and smiles for doing what the spectators and auditors would be ashamed of doing in their own persons, even if they had the power of doing it; and last, and probably worst of all, who was known to be in the habit of enlivening societies which they would have scorned to approach, still more frequently than their own, with eloquence no less magnificent; with wit, in all likelihood still more daring;

often enough, as the superiors whom he fronted without alarm might have guessed from the beginning, and had ere long no occasion to guess, with wit pointed at themselves.'

The farther we remove from this scene, the more singular will it seem to us : details of the exterior aspect of it are already full of interest. Most readers recollect Mr. Walker's personal interviews with Burns as among the best passages of his Narrative : a time will come when this reminiscence of Sir Walter Scott's, slight though it is, will also be precious :

'As for Burns,' writes Sir Walter, 'I may truly say, *Virgilium vidi tantùm*. I was a lad of fifteen in 1786–7, when he came first to Edinburgh, but had sense and feeling enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given the world to know him : but I had very little acquaintance with any literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country, the two sets that he most frequented. Mr. Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk of my father's. He knew Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner ; but had no opportunity to keep his word ; otherwise I might have seen more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable Professor Ferguson's, where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation, among whom I remember the celebrated Mr. Dugald Stewart. Of course, we youngsters sat silent, looked and listened. The only thing I remember which was remarkable in Burns's manner, was the effect produced upon him by a print of Bunbury's, representing a soldier lying dead on the snow, his dog sitting in misery on one side,—on the other, his widow, with a child in her arms. These lines were written beneath :

> "Cold on Canadian hills, or Minden's plain,
> Perhaps that mother wept her soldier slain ;
> Bent o'er her babe, her eye dissolved in dew,
> The big drops mingling with the milk he drew,
> Gave the sad presage of his future years,
> The child of misery baptised in tears."

'Burns seemed much affected by the print, or rather by the ideas which it suggested to his mind. He actually shed tears. He asked whose the lines were ; and it chanced that nobody but myself remembered that they occur in a half-forgotten

poem of Langhorne's called by the unpromising title of "The Justice of Peace." I whispered my information to a friend present; he mentioned it to Burns, who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, though of mere civility, I then received and still recollect with very great pleasure.

'His person was strong and robust; his manners rustic, not clownish; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity, which received part of its effect perhaps from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. His features are represented in Mr. Nasmyth's picture: but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished, as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. I should have taken the poet, had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old Scotch school, *i. e.* none of your modern agriculturists who keep labourers for their drudgery, but the *douce gudeman* who held his own plough. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a dark cast which glowed (I say literally *glowed*) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time. His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence, without the slightest presumption. Among the men who were the most learned of their time and country, he expressed himself with perfect firmness, but without the least intrusive forwardness; and when he differed in opinion, he did not hesitate to express it firmly, yet at the same time with modesty. I do not remember any part of his conversation distinctly enough to be quoted; nor did I ever see him again, except in the street, where he did not recognise me, as I could not expect he should. He was much caressed in Edinburgh: but (considering what literary emoluments have been since his day) the efforts made for his relief were extremely trifling.

'I remember, on this occasion I mention, I thought Burns's acquaintance with English poetry was rather limited; and also that, having twenty times the abilities of Allan Ramsay and of Fergusson, he talked of them with too much humility as his models: there was doubtless national predilection in his estimate.

'This is all I can tell you about Burns. I have only to add, that his dress corresponded with his manner. He was like a farmer dressed in his best to dine with the laird. I do not

speak *in malam partem*, when I say, I never saw a man in company with his superiors in station or information more perfectly free from either the reality or the affectation of embarrassment. I was told, but did not observe it, that his address to females was extremely deferential, and always with a turn either to the pathetic or humorous, which engaged their attention particularly. I have heard the late Duchess of Gordon remark this.—I do not know anything I can add to these recollections of forty years since.'

The conduct of Burns under this dazzling blaze of favour; the calm, unaffected, manly manner in which he not only bore it, but estimated its value, has justly been regarded as the best proof that could be given of his real vigour and integrity of mind. A little natural vanity, some touches of hypocritical modesty, some glimmerings of affectation, at least some fear of being thought affected, we could have pardoned in almost any man; but no such indication is to be traced here. In his unexampled situation the young peasant is not a moment perplexed; so many strange lights do not confuse him, do not lead him astray. Nevertheless, we cannot but perceive that this winter did him great and lasting injury. A somewhat clearer knowledge of men's affairs, scarcely of their characters, it did afford him; but a sharper feeling of Fortune's unequal arrangements in their social destiny it also left with him. He had seen the gay and gorgeous arena, in which the powerful are born to play their parts; nay had himself stood in the midst of it; and he felt more bitterly than ever, that here he was but a looker-on, and had no part or lot in that splendid game. From this time a jealous indignant fear of social degradation takes possession of him; and perverts, so far as aught could pervert, his private contentment, and his feelings towards his richer fellows. It was clear to Burns that he had talent enough to make a fortune, or a hundred fortunes, could he but have rightly willed this; it was clear also that he willed something far different, and therefore could not make one. Unhappy it was that he had not power to choose the one, and reject the other; but must halt forever between two opinions, two objects; making ham-

pered advancement towards either. But so is it with many men: we 'long for the merchandise, yet would fain keep the price;' and so stand chaffering with Fate, in vexatious altercation, till the night come, and our fair is over!

The Edinburgh Learned of that period were in general more noted for clearness of head than for warmth of heart: with the exception of the good old Blacklock, whose help was too ineffectual, scarcely one among them seems to have looked at Burns with any true sympathy, or indeed much otherwise than as at a highly curious *thing*. By the great also he is treated in the customary fashion; entertained at their tables and dismissed: certain modica of pudding and praise are, from time to time, gladly exchanged for the fascination of his presence; which exchange once effected, the bargain is finished, and each party goes his several way. At the end of this strange season, Burns gloomily sums up his gains and losses, and meditates on the chaotic future. In money he is somewhat richer: in fame and the show of happiness, infinitely richer; but in the substance of it, as poor as ever. Nay poorer; for his heart is now maddened still more with the fever of worldly Ambition; and through long years the disease will rack him with unprofitable sufferings, and weaken his strength for all true and nobler aims.

What Burns was next to do or to avoid; how a man so circumstanced was now to guide himself towards his true advantage, might at this point of time have been a question for the wisest. It was a question too, which apparently he was left altogether to answer for himself; of his learned or rich patrons it had not struck any individual to turn a thought on this so trivial matter. Without claiming for Burns the praise of perfect sagacity, we must say, that his Excise and Farm scheme does not seem to us a very unreasonable one; that we should be at a loss, even now, to suggest one decidedly better. Certain of his admirers have felt scandalised at his ever resolving to *gauge;* and would have had him lie at the pool, till the spirit of Patronage stirred the waters, that so, with one friendly plunge, all his sorrows might be healed. Unwise counsellors! They know not the manner of this spirit;

and how, in the lap of most golden dreams, a man might have happiness, were it not that in the interim he must die of hunger! It reflects credit on the manliness and sound sense of Burns, that he felt so early on what ground he was standing; and preferred self-help, on the humblest scale, to dependence and inaction, though with hope of far more splendid possibilities. But even these possibilities were not rejected in his scheme: he might expect, if it chanced that he *had* any friend, to rise, in no long period, into something even like opulence and leisure; while again, if it chanced that he had no friend, he could still live in security; and for the rest, he 'did not intend to borrow honour from any profession.' We reckon that his plan was honest and well-calculated: all turned on the execution of it. Doubtless it failed; yet not, we believe, from any vice inherent in itself. Nay, after all, it was no failure of external means, but of internal, that overtook Burns. His was no bankruptcy of the purse, but of the soul; to his last day, he owed no man anything.

Meanwhile he begins well: with two good and wise actions. His donation to his mother, munificent from a man whose income had lately been seven pounds a-year, was worthy of him, and not more than worthy. Generous also, and worthy of him, was the treatment of the woman whose life's welfare now depended on his pleasure. A friendly observer might have hoped serene days for him: his mind is on the true road to peace with itself: what clearness he still wants will be given as he proceeds; for the best teacher of duties, that still lie dim to us, is the Practice of those we see, and have at hand. Had the 'patrons of genius,' who could give him nothing, but taken nothing from him, at least nothing more! The wounds of his heart would have healed, vulgar ambition would have died away. Toil and Frugality would have been welcome, since Virtue dwelt with them; and Poetry would have shone through them as of old: and in her clear ethereal light, which was his own by birthright, he might have looked down on his earthly destiny, and all its obstructions, not with patience only, but with love.

But the patrons of genius would not have it so. Pictu-

resque tourists,[1] all manner of fashionable danglers after literature, and, far worse, all manner of convivial Mecænases, hovered round him in his retreat; and his good as well as his weak qualities secured them influence over him. He was flattered by their notice; and his warm social nature made it impossible for him to shake them off, and hold on his way apart from them. These men, as we believe, were proximately the means of his ruin. Not that they meant him any ill; they only meant themselves a little good; if he suffered harm, let *him* look to it! But they wasted his precious time and his precious talent; they disturbed his composure, broke down his returning habits of temperance and assiduous contented exertion. Their pampering was baneful to him; their cruelty, which soon followed, was equally baneful. The old grudge against Fortune's inequality awoke with new bitterness in their neighbourhood; and Burns had no retreat but to the 'Rock of Independence,' which is but an air-castle, after all, that looks well at a distance, but will screen no one from real wind and wet. Flushed with irregular excitement, exasperated alternately by contempt of others, and contempt of himself, Burns was no longer regaining his peace of mind, but fast losing it forever. There was a hollowness at the heart of his life, for his conscience did not now approve what he was doing.

Amid the vapours of unwise enjoyment, of bootless remorse, and angry discontent with Fate, his true loadstar, a life of

[1] There is one little sketch by certain 'English gentlemen' of this class, which, though adopted in Currie's Narrative, and since then repeated in most others, we have all along felt an invincible disposition to regard as imaginary: 'On a rock that projected into the stream, they saw 'a man employed in angling, of a singular appearance. He had a cap 'made of fox-skin on his head, a loose greatcoat fixed round him by a 'belt, from which depended an enormous Highland broad-sword. It 'was Burns.' Now, we rather think, it was *not* Burns. For, to say nothing of the fox-skin cap, the loose and quite Hibernian watchcoat with the belt, what are we to make of this 'enormous Highland broad-sword' depending from him? More especially, as there is no word of parish constables on the lookout to see whether, as Dennis phrases it, he had an eye to his own midriff or that of the public! Burns, of all men, had the least need, and the least tendency, to seek for distinction, either in his own eyes, or those of others, by such poor mummeries.

Poetry, with Poverty, nay with Famine if it must be so, was too often altogether hidden from his eyes. And yet he sailed a sea, where without some such loadstar there was no right steering. Meteors of French Politics rise before him, but these were not *his* stars. An accident this, which hastened, but did not originate, his worst distresses. In the mad contentions of that time, he comes in collision with certain official Superiors; is wounded by them; cruelly lacerated, we should say, could a dead mechanical implement, in any case, be called cruel: and shrinks, in indignant pain, into deeper self-seclusion, into gloomier moodiness than ever. His life has now lost its unity: it is a life of fragments; led with little aim, beyond the melancholy one of securing its own continuance,—in fits of wild false joy when such offered, and of black despondency when they passed away. His character before the world begins to suffer: calumny is busy with him; for a miserable man makes more enemies than friends. Some faults he has fallen into, and a thousand misfortunes; but deep criminality is what he stands accused of, and they that are *not* without sin cast the first stone at him! For is he not a well-wisher of the French Revolution, a Jacobin, and therefore in that one act guilty of all? These accusations, political and moral, it has since appeared, were false enough: but the world hesitated little to credit them. Nay, his convivial Mecænases themselves were not the last to do it. There is reason to believe that, in his later years, the Dumfries Aristocracy had partly withdrawn themselves from Burns, as from a tainted person, no longer worthy of their acquaintance. That painful class, stationed in all provincial cities, behind the outmost breastwork of Gentility, there to stand siege and do battle against the intrusions of Grocerdom and Grazierdom, had actually seen dishonour in the society of Burns, and branded him with their veto; had, as we vulgarly say, *cut* him! We find one passage in this Work of Mr. Lockhart's, which will not out of our thoughts:

'A gentleman of that county, whose name I have already more than once had occasion to refer to, has often told me

that he was seldom more grieved, than when riding into Dumfries one fine summer evening about this time to attend a county ball, he saw Burns walking alone, on the shady side of the principal street of the town, while the opposite side was gay with successive groups of gentlemen and ladies, all drawn together for the festivities of the night, not one of whom appeared willing to recognise him. The horseman dismounted, and joined Burns, who on his proposing to cross the street said: "Nay, nay, my young friend, that's all over now;" and quoted, after a pause, some verses of Lady Grizzel Baillie's pathetic ballad:

"His bonnet stood ance fu' fair on his brow,
His auld ane look'd better than mony ane's new;
But now he lets 't wear ony way it will hing,
And casts himsell dowie upon the corn-bing.

O were we young, as we ance hae been,
We sud hae been galloping down on yon green,
And linking it ower the lily-white lea!
And werena my heart light, I wad die."

It was little in Burns's character to let his feelings on certain subjects escape in this fashion. He, immediately after reciting these verses, assumed the sprightliness of his most pleasing manner; and taking his young friend home with him, entertained him very agreeably till the hour of the ball arrived.'

Alas! when we think that Burns now sleeps 'where bitter indignation can no longer lacerate his heart,'[1] and that most of those fair dames and frizzled gentlemen already lie at his side, where the breastwork of gentility is quite thrown down, — who would not sigh over the thin delusions and foolish toys that divide heart from heart, and make man unmerciful to his brother!

It was not now to be hoped that the genius of Burns would ever reach maturity, or accomplish aught worthy of itself. His spirit was jarred in its melody; not the soft breath of natural feeling, but the rude hand of Fate, was now sweeping over the strings. And yet what harmony was in him,

[1] *Ubi sæva indignatio cor ulterius lacerare nequit.* Swift's Epitaph.

what music even in his discords! How the wild tones had a charm for the simplest and the wisest; and all men felt and knew that here also was one of the Gifted! 'If he entered 'an inn at midnight, after all the inmates were in bed, the 'news of his arrival circulated from the cellar to the garret; 'and ere ten minutes had elapsed, the landlord and all his 'guests were assembled!' Some brief pure moments of poetic life were yet appointed him, in the composition of his Songs. We can understand how he grasped at this employment; and how too, he spurned all other reward for it but what the labour itself brought him. For the soul of Burns, though scathed and marred, was yet living in its full moral strength, though sharply conscious of its errors and abasement: and here, in his destitution and degradation, was one act of seeming nobleness and self-devotedness left even for him to perform. He felt too, that with all the 'thoughtless follies' that had 'laid him low,' the world was unjust and cruel to him; and he silently appealed to another and calmer time. Not as a hired soldier, but as a patriot, would he strive for the glory of his country: so he cast from him the poor sixpence a-day, and served zealously as a volunteer. Let us not grudge him this last luxury of his existence; let him not have appealed to us in vain! The money was not necessary to him; he struggled through without it: long since, these guineas would have been gone, and now the high-mindedness of refusing them will plead for him in all hearts forever.

We are here arrived at the crisis of Burns's life; for matters had now taken such a shape with him as could not long continue. If improvement was not to be looked for, Nature could only for a limited time maintain this dark and maddening warfare against the world and itself. We are not medically informed whether any continuance of years was, at this period, probable for Burns; whether his death is to be looked on as in some sense an accidental event, or only as the natural consequence of the long series of events that had preceded. The latter seems to be the likelier opinion; and yet it is by no means a certain one. At all events, as we

have said, *some* change could not be very distant. Three gates of deliverance, it seems to us, were open for Burns: clear poetical activity; madness; or death. The first, with longer life, was still possible, though not probable; for physical causes were beginning to be concerned in it: and yet Burns had an iron resolution; could he but have seen and felt, that not only his highest glory, but his first duty, and the true medicine for all his woes lay here. The second was still less probable; for his mind was ever among the clearest and firmest. So the milder third gate was opened for him; and he passed, not softly, yet speedily, into that still country, where the hail-storms and fire-showers do not reach, and the heaviest-laden wayfarer at length lays down his load!

Contemplating this sad end of Burns, and how he sank unaided by any real help, uncheered by any wise sympathy, generous minds have sometimes figured to themselves, with a reproachful sorrow, that much might have been done for him; that by counsel, true affection and friendly ministrations, he might have been saved to himself and the world. We question whether there is not more tenderness of heart than soundness of judgment in these suggestions. It seems dubious to us whether the richest, wisest, most benevolent individual could have lent Burns any effectual help. Counsel, which seldom profits any one, he did not need; in his understanding, he knew the right from the wrong, as well perhaps as any man ever did; but the persuasion, which would have availed him, lies not so much in the head as in the heart, where no argument or expostulation could have assisted much to implant it. As to money again, we do not believe that this was his essential want; or well see how any private man could, even presupposing Burns's consent, have bestowed on him an independent fortune, with much prospect of decisive advantage. It is a mortifying truth, that two men in any rank of society, could hardly be found virtuous enough to give money, and to take it as a necessary gift, without injury to the moral entireness of one or both. But so stands the fact: Friendship, in the old heroic sense of that term, no

longer exists; except in the cases of kindred or other legal affinity, it is in reality no longer expected, or recognised as a virtue among men. A close observer of manners has pronounced 'Patronage,' that is, pecuniary or other economic furtherance, to be 'twice cursed; cursing him that gives, and him that takes!' And thus, in regard to outward matters also, it has become the rule, as in regard to inward it always was and must be the rule, that no one shall look for effectual help to another; but that each shall rest contented with what help he can afford himself. Such, we say, is the principle of modern Honour; naturally enough growing out of that sentiment of Pride, which we inculcate and encourage as the basis of our whole social morality. Many a poet has been poorer than Burns; but no one was ever prouder: we may question whether, without great precautions, even a pension from Royalty would not have galled and encumbered, more than actually assisted him.

Still less, therefore, are we disposed to join with another class of Burns's admirers, who accuse the higher ranks among us of having ruined Burns by their selfish neglect of him. We have already stated our doubts whether direct pecuniary help, had it been offered, would have been accepted, or could have proved very effectual. We shall readily admit, however, that much was to be done for Burns; that many a poisoned arrow might have been warded from his bosom; many an entanglement in his path cut asunder by the hand of the powerful; and light and heat, shed on him from high places, would have made his humble atmosphere more genial; and the softest heart then breathing might have lived and died with some fewer pangs. Nay, we shall grant farther, and for Burns it is granting much, that, with all his pride, he would have thanked, even with exaggerated gratitude, any one who had cordially befriended him: patronage, unless once cursed, needed not to have been twice so. At all events, the poor promotion he desired in his calling might have been granted: it was his own scheme, therefore likelier than any other to be of service. All this it might have been a luxury, nay it was a duty, for our nobility to have done. No part of all this, how-

ever, did any of them do; or apparently attempt, or wish to do: so much is granted against them. But what then is the amount of their blame? Simply that they were men of the world, and walked by the principles of such men; that they treated Burns, as other nobles and other commoners had done other poets; as the English did Shakspeare; as King Charles and his Cavaliers did Butler, as King Philip and his Grandees did Cervantes. Do men gather grapes of thorns; or shall we cut down our thorns for yielding only a *fence* and haws? How, indeed, could the 'nobility and gentry of his native land' hold out any help to this 'Scottish Bard, proud of his name and country?' Were the nobility and gentry so much as able rightly to help themselves? Had they not their game to preserve; their borough interests to strengthen; dinners, therefore, of various kinds to eat and give? Were their means more than adequate to all this business, or less than adequate? Less than adequate in general; few of them in reality were richer than Burns; many of them were poorer; for sometimes they had to wring their supplies, as with thumbscrews, from the hard hand; and, in their need of guineas, to forget their duty of mercy; which Burns was never reduced to do. Let us pity and forgive them. The game they preserved and shot, the dinners they ate and gave, the borough interests they strengthened, the *little* Babylons they severally builded by the glory of their might, are all melted or melting back into the primeval Chaos, as man's merely selfish endeavours are fated to do: and here was an action, extending, in virtue of its worldly influence, we may say, through all time; in virtue of its moral nature, beyond all time, being immortal as the Spirit of Goodness itself; this action was offered them to do, and light was not given them to do it. Let us pity and forgive them. But better than pity, let us go and *do otherwise*. Human suffering did not end with the life of Burns: neither was the solemn mandate, 'Love one another, bear one another's burdens,' given to the rich only, but to all men. True, we shall find no Burns to relieve, to assuage by our aid or our pity; but celestial natures, groaning under the fardels of a weary life, we shall still

find; and that wretchedness which Fate has rendered *voiceless* and *tuneless* is not the least wretched, but the most.

Still, we do not think that the blame of Burns's failure lies chiefly with the world. The world, it seems to us, treated him with more, rather than with less kindness than it usually shows to such men. It has ever, we fear, shown but small favour to its Teachers: hunger and nakedness, perils and revilings, the prison, the cross, the poison-chalice have, in most times and countries, been the market-price it has offered for Wisdom, the welcome with which it has greeted those who have come to enlighten and purify it. Homer and Socrates, and the Christian Apostles, belong to old days; but the world's Martyrology was not completed with these. Roger Bacon and Galileo languish in priestly dungeons; Tasso pines in the cell of a madhouse; Camoens dies begging on the streets of Lisbon. So neglected, so 'persecuted they the Prophets,' not in Judea only, but in all places where men have been. We reckon that every poet of Burns's order is, or should be, a prophet and teacher to his age; that he has no right to expect great kindness from it, but rather is bound to do it great kindness; that Burns, in particular, experienced fully the usual proportion of the world's goodness; and that the blame of his failure, as we have said, lies not chiefly with the world.

Where then does it lie? We are forced to answer: With himself; it is his inward, not his outward misfortunes that bring him to the dust. Seldom, indeed, is it otherwise; seldom is a life morally wrecked but the grand cause lies in some internal mal-arrangement, some want less of good fortune than of good guidance. Nature fashions no creature without implanting in it the strength needful for its action and duration; least of all does she so neglect her masterpiece and darling, the poetic soul. Neither can we believe that it is in the power of *any* external circumstances utterly to ruin the mind of a man; nay, if proper wisdom be given him, even so much as to affect its essential health and beauty. The sternest sum-total of all worldly misfortunes is Death; nothing more *can* lie in the cup of human woe: yet many men, in all

ages, have triumphed over Death, and led it captive; converting its physical victory into a moral victory for themselves, into a seal and immortal consecration for all that their past life had achieved. What has been done, may be done again: nay, it is but the degree and not the kind of such heroism that differs in different seasons; for without some portion of this spirit, not of boisterous daring, but of silent fearlessness, of Self-denial in all its forms, no good man, in any scene or time, has ever attained to be good.

We have already stated the error of Burns; and mourned over it, rather than blamed it. It was the want of unity in his purposes, of consistency in his aims; the hapless attempt to mingle in friendly union the common spirit of the world with the spirit of poetry, which is of a far different and altogether irreconcilable nature. Burns was nothing wholly; and Burns could be nothing, no man formed as he was can be anything, by halves. The heart, not of a mere hot-blooded, popular Verse-monger, or poetical *Restaurateur*, but of a true Poet and Singer, worthy of the old religious heroic times, had been given him: and he fell in an age, not of heroism and religion, but of scepticism, selfishness and triviality, when true Nobleness was little understood, and its place supplied by a hollow, dissocial, altogether barren and unfruitful principle of Pride. The influences of that age, his open, kind, susceptible nature, to say nothing of his highly untoward situation, made it more than usually difficult for him to cast aside, or rightly subordinate; the better spirit that was within him ever sternly demanded its rights, its supremacy: he spent his life in endeavouring to reconcile these two; and lost it, as he must lose it, without reconciling them.

Burns was born poor; and born also to continue poor, for he would not endeavour to be otherwise: this it had been well could he have once for all admitted, and considered as finally settled. He was poor, truly; but hundreds even of his own class and order of minds have been poorer, yet have suffered nothing deadly from it: nay, his own Father had a far sorer battle with ungrateful destiny than his was; and he did not yield to it, but died courageously warring, and to all

moral intents prevailing, against it. True, Burns had little means, had even little time for poetry, his only real pursuit and vocation; but so much the more precious was what little he had. In all these external respects his case was hard; but very far from the hardest. Poverty, incessant drudgery and much worse evils, it has often been the lot of Poets and wise men to strive with, and their glory to conquer. Locke was banished as a traitor; and wrote his *Essay on the Human Understanding* sheltering himself in a Dutch garret. Was Milton rich or at his ease when he composed *Paradise Lost?* Not only low, but fallen from a height; not only poor, but impoverished; in darkness and with dangers compassed round, he sang his immortal song, and found fit audience, though few. Did not Cervantes finish his work, a maimed soldier and in prison? Nay, was not the *Araucana*, which Spain acknowledges as its Epic, written without even the aid of paper; on scraps of leather, as the stout fighter and voyager snatched any moment from that wild warfare?

And what then had these men, which Burns wanted? Two things; both which, it seems to us, are indispensable for such men. They had a true, religious principle of morals; and a single not a double aim in their activity. They were not self-seekers and self-worshippers; but seekers and worshippers of something far better than Self. Not personal enjoyment was their object; but a high, heroic idea of Religion, of Patriotism, of heavenly Wisdom in one or the other form, ever hovered before them; in which cause, they neither shrank from suffering, nor called on the earth to witness it as something wonderful; but patiently endured, counting it blessedness enough so to spend and be spent. Thus the 'golden-calf of Self-love,' however curiously carved, was not their Deity; but the Invisible Goodness, which alone is man's reasonable service. This feeling was as a celestial fountain, whose streams refreshed into gladness and beauty all the provinces of their otherwise too desolate existence. In a word, they willed one thing, to which all other things were subordinated and made subservient; and therefore they accomplished it. The wedge will rend rocks; but its edge must

be sharp and single: if it be double, the wedge is bruised in pieces, and will rend nothing.

Part of this superiority these men owed to their age; in which heroism and devotedness were still practised, or at least not yet disbelieved in: but much of it likewise they owed to themselves. With Burns again it was different. His morality, in most of its practical points, is that of a mere worldly man; enjoyment, in a finer or coarser shape, is the only thing he longs and strives for. A noble instinct sometimes raises him above this; but an instinct only, and acting only for moments. He has no Religion; in the shallow age, where his days were cast, Religion was not discriminated from the New and Old Light *forms* of Religion; and was, with these, becoming obsolete in the minds of men. His heart, indeed, is alive with a trembling adoration, but there is no temple in his understanding. He lives in darkness and in the shadow of doubt. His religion, at best, is an anxious wish; like that of Rabelais, 'a great perhaps.'

He loved Poetry warmly, and in his heart; could he but have loved it purely, and with his whole undivided heart, it had been well. For Poetry, as Burns could have followed it, is but another form of Wisdom, of Religion; is itself Wisdom and Religion. But this also was denied him. His poetry is a stray vagrant gleam, which will not be extinguished within him, yet rises not to be the true light of his path, but is often a wildfire that misleads him. It was not necessary for Burns to be rich, to be, or to seem, 'independent;' but it *was* necessary for him to be at one with his own heart; to place what was highest in his nature highest also in his life; 'to seek within himself for that consistency and sequence, which external events would forever refuse him.' He was born a poet; poetry was the celestial element of his being, and should have been the soul of his whole endeavours. Lifted into that serene ether, whither he had wings given him to mount, he would have needed no other elevation: poverty, neglect and all evil, save the desecration of himself and his Art, were a small matter to him; the pride and the passions of the world lay far beneath his feet;

and he looked down alike on noble and slave, on prince and beggar, and all that wore the stamp of man, with clear recognition, with brotherly affection, with sympathy, with pity. Nay, we question whether for his culture as a Poet, poverty and much suffering for a season were not absolutely advantageous. Great men, in looking back over their lives, have testified to that effect. 'I would not for much,' says Jean Paul, 'that I had been born richer.' And yet Paul's birth was poor enough; for, in another place, he adds: 'The prisoners' allowance is bread and water; and I had often only the latter.' But the gold that is refined in the hottest furnace comes out the purest; or, as he has himself expressed it, 'the canary-bird sings sweeter the longer it has been trained in a darkened cage.'

A man like Burns might have divided his hours between poetry and virtuous industry; industry which all true feeling sanctions, nay prescribes, and which has a beauty, for that cause, beyond the pomp of thrones: but to divide his hours between poetry and rich men's banquets was an ill-starred and inauspicious attempt. How could he be at ease at such banquets? What had he to do there, mingling his music with the coarse roar of altogether earthly voices; brightening the thick smoke of intoxication with fire lent him from heaven? Was it his aim to *enjoy* life? To-morrow he must go drudge as an Exciseman! We wonder not that Burns became moody, indignant, and at times an offender against certain rules of society; but rather that he did not grow utterly frantic, and run *amuck* against them all. How could a man, so falsely placed, by his own or others' fault, ever know contentment or peaceable diligence for an hour? What he did, under such perverse guidance, and what he forbore to do, alike fill us with astonishment at the natural strength and worth of his character.

Doubtless there was a remedy for this perverseness; but not in others; only in himself; least of all in simple increase of wealth and worldly 'respectability.' We hope we have now heard enough about the efficacy of wealth for poetry and to make poets happy. Nay, have we not seen another instance

of it in these very days? Byron, a man of an endowment considerably less ethereal than that of Burns, is born in the rank not of a Scottish ploughman, but of an English peer: the highest worldly honours, the fairest worldly career, are his by inheritance; the richest harvest of fame he soon reaps, in another province, by his own hand. And what does all this avail him? Is he happy, is he good, is he true? Alas, he has a poet's soul, and strives towards the Infinite and the Eternal; and soon feels that all this is but mounting to the house-top to reach the stars! Like Burns, he is only a proud man; might, like him, have 'purchased a pocket-copy of Milton to study the character of Satan;' for Satan also is Byron's grand exemplar, the hero of his poetry, and the model apparently of his conduct. As in Burns's case too, the celestial element will not mingle with the clay of earth; both poet and man of the world he must not be; vulgar Ambition will not live kindly with poetic Adoration; he *cannot* serve God and Mammon. Byron, like Burns, is not happy; nay, he is the most wretched of all men. His life is falsely arranged: the fire that is in him is not a strong, still, central fire, warming into beauty the products of a world; but it is the mad fire of a volcano; and now,—we look sadly into the ashes of a crater, which erelong will fill itself with snow!

Byron and Burns were sent forth as missionaries to their generation, to teach it a higher Doctrine, a purer Truth: they had a message to deliver, which left them no rest till it was accomplished; in dim throes of pain, this divine behest lay smouldering within them; for they knew not what it meant, and felt it only in mysterious anticipation, and they had to die without articulately uttering it. They are in the camp of the Unconverted; yet not as high messengers of rigorous though benignant truth, but as soft flattering singers, and in pleasant fellowship, will they live there: they are first adulated, then persecuted; they accomplish little for others; they find no peace for themselves, but only death and the peace of the grave. We confess, it is not without a certain mournful awe that we view the fate of these noble souls, so richly gifted, yet ruined to so little purpose with all their

gifts. It seems to us there is a stern moral taught in this piece of history,—*twice* told us in our own time! Surely to men of like genius, if there be any such, it carries with it a lesson of deep impressive significance. Surely it would become such a man, furnished for the highest of all enterprises, that of being the Poet of his Age, to consider well what it is that he attempts, and in what spirit he attempts it. For the words of Milton are true in all times, and were never truer than in this: 'He, who would write heroic poems, must make his whole life a heroic poem.' If he cannot first so make his life, then let him hasten from this arena; for neither its lofty glories, nor its fearful perils, are fit for him. Let him dwindle into a modish ballad-monger; let him worship and besing the idols of the time, and the time will not fail to reward him. If, indeed, he can endure to live in that capacity! Byron and Burns could not live as idol-priests, but the fire of their own hearts consumed them; and better it was for them that they could not. For it is not in the favour of the great or of the small, but in a life of truth, and in the inexpugnable citadel of his own soul, that a Byron's or a Burns's strength must lie. Let the great stand aloof from him, or know how to reverence him. Beautiful is the union of wealth with favour and furtherance for literature; like the costliest flower-jar enclosing the loveliest amaranth. Yet let not the relation be mistaken. A true poet is not one whom they can hire by money or flattery to be a minister of their pleasures, their writer of occasional verses, their purveyor of table-wit; he cannot be their menial, he cannot even be their partisan. At the peril of both parties, let no such union be attempted! Will a Courser of the Sun work softly in the harness of a Dray-horse? His hoofs are of fire, and his path is through the heavens, bringing light to all lands; will he lumber on mud highways, dragging ale for earthly appetites from door to door?

But we must stop short in these considerations, which would lead us to boundless lengths. We had something to say on the public moral character of Burns; but this also we must forbear. We are far from regarding him as guilty before the

world, as guiltier than the average; nay from doubting that he is less guilty than one of ten thousand. Tried at a tribunal far more rigid than that where the *Plebiscita* of common civic reputations are pronounced, he has seemed to us even there less worthy of blame than of pity and wonder. But the world is habitually unjust in its judgments of such men; unjust on many grounds, of which this one may be stated as the substance: It decides, like a court of law, by dead statutes; and not positively but negatively, less on what is done right, than on what is or is not done wrong. Not the few inches of deflection from the mathematical orbit, which are so easily measured, but the *ratio* of these to the whole diameter, constitutes the real aberration. This orbit may be a planet's, its diameter the breadth of the solar system; or it may be a city hippodrome; nay the circle of a ginhorse, its diameter a score of feet or paces. But the inches of deflection only are measured: and it is assumed that the diameter of the ginhorse, and that of the planet, will yield the same ratio when compared with them. Here lies the root of many a blind, cruel condemnation of Burnses, Swifts, Rousseaus, which one never listens to with approval. Granted, the ship comes into harbour with shrouds and tackle damaged; the pilot is blameworthy; he has not been all-wise and all-powerful: but to know *how* blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the Globe, or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs.

With our readers in general, with men of right feeling anywhere, we are not required to plead for Burns. In pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts, in a far nobler mausoleum than that one of marble; neither will his Works, even as they are, pass away from the memory of men. While the Shakspeares and Miltons roll on like mighty rivers through the country of Thought, bearing fleets of traffickers and assiduous pearl-fishers on their waves; this little Valclusa Fountain will also arrest our eye: for this also is of Nature's own and most cunning workmanship, bursts from the depths of the earth, with a full gushing current, into the light of day; and often will the traveller turn aside to drink of its clear waters, and muse among its rocks and pines!

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

ESSAYS

COLLECTED AND REPUBLISHED

BY

THOMAS CARLYLE

CHARACTERISTICS—GOETHE'S PORTRAIT—BIOGRAPHY—BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON—DEATH OF GOETHE

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CHARACTERISTICS.

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CHARACTERISTICS.

THE healthy know not of their health, only the sick. Unity, agreement, always silent or soft-voiced; only discord noisily proclaims itself. (p. 7).—Happy Unconsciousness of childhood: The beginning of Inquiry is Disease. Life itself a disease, a working incited by suffering. Conscious and Unconscious domains of human activity: Meditation. Genius ever a secret to itself. The healthy understanding, not Logical or argumentative, but intuitive: Unconscious Spontaneity the characteristic of all right performance. Virtue, when it can be philosophised of, or has become aware of itself, is sickly and beginning to decline: The barrenest of all mortals, the Sentimentalist. (8).—In Society man first feels what he is, first becomes what he can be. To figure Society as endowed with life, the statement of a fact rather than a metaphor. What the actual condition of Society? a difficulty for the wisest. In all vital things, an artificial and a Natural. The vigorous ages of a Roman Commonwealth, and of *all* Commonwealths. Man's highest and sole blessedness to toil, and know what to toil at. Healthy Literature, and unhealthy: So soon as Prophecy and inspired Poetry cease, Argumentation and jangling begin. (16).—Silence and Mystery: Hymns to the Night: What mortals call Death, properly the beginning of Life. In the rudest mind some intimation of the greatness there is in Mystery. (22).—Society in our days boastfully and painfully conscious of itself: So-called March of Intellect. Our whole relations to the Universe become an Inquiry, a Doubt. Self-consciousness not the disease, but the symptom and attempt towards cure. The outward of Physical diseases of our Society; a whole nosology of them. Our Spiritual condition no less sickly than our Physical. Instead of heroic martyr Conduct, we have 'Discourses on the Evidences;' endeavouring to make it probable such a thing as Religion exists. Literature but a branch of Religion, always participating in its character: The modern sin of View-hunting and scene-painting. Literature first becoming one boundless self-devouring Review, like a sick thing 'listening to itself.' (29).—Philosophy, except as Poetry and Religion, should have no being. The disease of Metaphysics. Doubt, the inexhaustible material whereon Action works; which only earnest Action can fashion into Certainty. How, by merely testing and rejecting what is not, shall we ever attain possession of what *is?* The profitable Speculation,—What is to be done; and How to do it? Only in free Effort can any blessedness be imagined for us. Eras of Faith; and our own era of Faithlessness: The Godlike vanished from the world. To the better order of minds any mad joy of Denial has long since ceased. The Old has passed away, and Time

still in pangs of travail with the New. (36).—Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures*, and Mr. Hope's *Essay*, symbols of the two Extremes of our whole modern system of Thought; its effete Spiritualism, and dead decomposition of Materialistic jargon. Human Progress: Universal law of Change and Growth. This age also not wholly without its Prophets. Utilitarian problems and failures: Given a world of Knaves, to Produce an Honesty from their united action. Strange light-gleams: Age of Miracles; as it ever was, is, and will be. He that has an eye and a heart can even now say—Why should I falter? Behind and before each one of us lies a whole Godlike Eternity, of inheritance and of possibility. (37).

CHARACTERISTICS.[1]

[1831.]

The healthy know not of their health, but only the sick: this is the Physician's Aphorism; and applicable in a far wider sense than he gives it. We may say, it holds no less in moral, intellectual, political, poetical, than in merely corporeal therapeutics; that wherever, or in what shape soever, powers of the sort which can be named *vital* are at work, herein lies the test of their working right or working wrong.

In the Body, for example, as all doctors are agreed, the first condition of complete health is, that each organ perform its function unconsciously, unheeded; let but any organ announce its separate existence, were it even boastfully, and for pleasure, not for pain, then already has one of those unfortunate 'false centres of sensibility' established itself, already is derangement there. The perfection of bodily wellbeing is, that the collective bodily activities seem one; and be manifested, moreover, not in themselves, but in the action they accomplish. If a Dr. Kitchiner boast that his system is in high order, Dietetic Philosophy may indeed take credit; but the true Peptician was that Countryman who answered that,

[1] Edinburgh Review, No. 108.—1. An Essay on the Origin and Prospects of Man. By Thomas Hope. 3 vols. 8vo. London, 1831.

2. *Philosophische Vorlesungen, insbesondere über Philosophie der Sprache und des Wortes. Geschrieben und vorgetragen zu Dresden im December* 1828, *und in den ersten Tagen des Januars* 1829 (Philosophical Lectures, especially on the Philosophy of Language and the Gift of Speech. Written and delivered at Dresden in December 1828, and the early days of January 1829). By Friedrich von Schlegel. 8vo. Vienna, 1830.

"for his part, he had no system." In fact, unity, agreement is always silent, or soft-voiced; it is only discord that loudly proclaims itself. So long as the several elements of Life, all fitly adjusted, can pour forth their movement like harmonious tuned strings, it is a melody and unison; Life, from its mysterious fountains, flows out as in celestial music and diapason, —which also, like that other music of the spheres, even because it is perennial and complete, without interruption and without imperfection, might be fabled to escape the ear. Thus too, in some languages, is the state of health well denoted by a term expressing unity; when we feel ourselves as we wish to be, we say that we are *whole*.

Few mortals, it is to be feared, are permanently blessed with that felicity of 'having no system;' nevertheless, most of us looking back on young years, may remember seasons of a light, aërial translucency and elasticity and perfect freedom; the body had not yet become the prison-house of the soul, but was its vehicle and implement, like a creature of the thought, and altogether pliant to its bidding. We knew not that we had limbs, we only lifted, hurled and leapt; through eye and ear, and all avenues of sense, came clear unimpeded tidings from without, and from within issued clear victorious force; we stood as in the centre of Nature, giving and receiving, in harmony with it all; unlike Virgil's Husbandmen, 'too happy *because* we did not know our blessedness.' In those days, health and sickness were foreign traditions that did not concern us; our whole being was as yet One, the whole man like an incorporated Will. Such, were Rest or ever-successful Labour the human lot, might our life continue to be: a pure, perpetual, unregarded music; a beam of perfect white light, rendering all things visible, but itself unseen, even because it was of that perfect whiteness and no irregular obstruction had yet broken it into colours. The beginning of Inquiry is Disease: all Science, if we consider well, as it must have originated in the feeling of something being wrong, so it is and continues to be but Division, Dismemberment, and partial healing of the wrong. Thus, as was of old written, the Tree of Knowledge springs from a root of evil, and bears

fruits of good and evil. Had Adam remained in Paradise, there had been no Anatomy and no Metaphysics.

But, alas, as the Philosopher declares, 'Life itself is a disease; a working incited by suffering;' action from passion! The memory of that first state of Freedom and paradisiac Unconsciousness has faded away into an ideal poetic dream. We stand here too conscious of many things: with Knowledge, the symptom of Derangement, we must even do our best to restore a little Order. Life is, in few instances, and at rare intervals, the diapason of a heavenly melody; oftenest the fierce jar of disruptions and convulsions, which, do what we will, there is no disregarding. Nevertheless, such is still the wish of Nature on our behalf; in all vital action, her manifest purpose and effort is, that we should be unconscious of it, and, like the peptic Countryman, never know that we 'have a system.' For indeed vital action everywhere is emphatically a means, not an end; Life is not given us for the mere sake of Living, but always with an ulterior external Aim: neither is it on the process, on the means, but rather on the result, that Nature, in any of her doings, is wont to entrust us with insight and volition. Boundless as is the domain of man, it is but a small fractional proportion of it that he rules with Consciousness and by Forethought: what he can contrive, nay what he can altogether know and comprehend, is essentially the mechanical, small; the great is ever, in one sense or other, the vital; it is essentially the mysterious, and only the surface of it can be understood. But Nature, it might seem, strives, like a kind mother, to hide from us even this, that she is a mystery: she will have us rest on her beautiful and awful bosom as if it were our secure home; on the bottomless boundless Deep, whereon all human things fearfully and wonderfully swim, she will have us walk and build, as if the film which supported us there (which any scratch of a bare bodkin will rend asunder, any sputter of a pistol-shot instantaneously burn up) were no film, but a solid rock-foundation. Forever in the neighbourhood of an inevitable Death, man can forget that he is born to die; of his Life, which, strictly meditated, contains in it an Immensity and an Eternity, he can conceive

lightly, as of a simple implement wherewith to do day-labour and earn wages. So cunningly does Nature, the mother of all highest Art, which only apes her from afar, 'body forth the Finite from the Infinite;' and guide man safe on his wondrous path, not more by endowing him with vision, than, at the right place, with blindness! Under all her works, chiefly under her noblest work, Life, lies a basis of Darkness, which she benignantly conceals; in Life too, the roots and inward circulations which stretch down fearfully to the regions of Death and Night, shall not hint of their existence, and only the fair stem with its leaves and flowers, shone on by the fair sun, shall disclose itself, and joyfully grow.

However, without venturing into the abstruse, or too eagerly asking Why and How, in things where our answer must needs prove, in great part, an echo of the question, let us be content to remark farther, in the merely historical way, how that Aphorism of the bodily Physician holds good in quite other departments. Of the Soul, with her activities, we shall find it no less true than of the Body: nay, cry the Spiritualists, is not that very division of the unity, Man, into a dualism of Soul and Body, itself the symptom of disease; as perhaps, your frightful theory of Materialism, of his being but a Body, and therefore, at least, once more a unity, may be the paroxysm which was critical, and the beginning of cure! But omitting this, we observe, with confidence enough, that the truly strong mind, view it as Intellect, as Morality, or under any other aspect, is nowise the mind acquainted with its strength; that here as before the sign of health is Unconsciousness. In our inward, as in our outward world, what is mechanical lies open to us: not what is dynamical and has vitality. Of our Thinking, we might say, it is but the mere upper surface that we shape into articulate Thoughts;—underneath the region of argument and conscious discourse, lies the region of meditation; here, in its quiet mysterious depths, dwells what vital force is in us; here, if aught is to be created, and not merely manufactured and communicated, must the work go on. Manufacture is intelligible, but trivial; Creation is great, and cannot be understood. Thus if the Debater and Demonstra-

tor, whom we may rank as the lowest of true thinkers, knows what he has done, and how he did it, the Artist, whom we rank as the highest, knows not; must speak of Inspiration, and in one or the other dialect, call his work the gift of a divinity.

But on the whole, 'genius is ever a secret to itself;' of this old truth we have, on all sides, daily evidence. The Shakspeare takes no airs for writing *Hamlet* and the *Tempest*, understands not that it is anything surprising; Milton, again, is more conscious of his faculty, which accordingly is an inferior one. On the other hand, what cackling and strutting must we not often hear and see, when, in some shape of academical prolusion, maiden speech, review article, this or the other well-fledged goose has produced its goose-egg, of quite measurable value, were it the pink of its whole kind; and wonders why all mortals do not wonder!

Foolish enough, too, was the College Tutor's surprise at Walter Shandy; how, though unread in Aristotle, he could nevertheless argue; and not knowing the name of any dialectic tool, handled them all to perfection. Is it the skilfullest anatomist that cuts the best figure at Sadler's Wells? Or does the boxer hit better for knowing that he has a *flexor longus* and a *flexor brevis?* But indeed, as in the higher case of the Poet, so here in that of the Speaker and Inquirer the true force is an unconscious one. The healthy Understanding, we should say, is not the Logical, argumentative, but the Intuitive; for the end of the Understanding is not to prove and find reasons, but to know and believe. Of logic, and its limits, and uses and abuses, there were much to be said and examined; one fact, however, which chiefly concerns us here, has long been familiar: that the man of logic and the man of insight; the Reasoner and the Discoverer, or even Knower, are quite separable,—indeed, for most part, quite separate characters. In practical matters, for example, has it not become almost proverbial that the man of logic cannot prosper? This is he whom business-people call Systematic and Theoriser and Wordmonger; his *vital* intellectual force lies dormant or extinct, his whole force is mechanical, conscious: of such a one

it is foreseen that, when once confronted with the infinite complexities of the real world, his little compact theorem of the world will be found wanting; that unless he can throw it overboard, and become a new creature, he will necessarily founder. Nay, in mere Speculation itself, the most ineffectual of all characters, generally speaking, is your dialectic man-at-arms; were he armed cap-a-pie in syllogistic mail of proof, and perfect master of logic-fence, how little does it avail him! Consider the old Schoolmen, and their pilgrimage towards Truth: the faithfullest endeavour, incessant unwearied motion, often great natural vigour; only no progress: nothing but antic feats of one limb poised against the other; there they balanced, somersetted and made postures; at best gyrated swiftly, with some pleasure, like Spinning Dervishes, and ended where they began. So is it, so will it always be, with all System-makers and builders of logical card-castles; of which class a certain remnant must, in every age, as they do in our own, survive and build. Logic is good, but it is not the best. The Irrefragable Doctor, with his chains of induction, his corollaries, dilemmas, and other cunning logical diagrams and apparatus, will cast you a beautiful horoscope, and speak reasonable things; nevertheless your stolen jewel, which you wanted him to find you, is not forthcoming. Often by some winged word, winged as the thunderbolt is, of a Luther, a Napoleon, a Goethe, shall we see the difficulty split asunder, and its secret laid bare; while the Irrefragable, with all his logical tools, hews at it, and hovers round it, and finds it on all hands too hard for him.

Again, in the difference between Oratory and Rhetoric, as indeed everywhere in that superiority of what is called the Natural over the Artificial, we find a similar illustration. The Orator persuades and carries all with him, he knows not how; the Rhetorician can prove that he ought to have persuaded and carried all with him: the one is in a state of healthy unconsciousness, as if he 'had no system;' the other, in virtue of regimen and dietetic punctuality, feels at best that 'his system is in high order.' So stands it, in short, with all the forms of Intellect, whether as directed to the finding of truth, or to the

fit imparting thereof; to Poetry, to Eloquence, to depth of insight, which is the basis of both these; always the characteristic of right performance is a certain spontaneity, an unconsciousness; 'the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick.' So that the old precept of the critic, as crabbed as it looked to his ambitious disciple, might contain in it a most fundamental truth, applicable to us all, and in much else than Literature: "Whenever you have written any sentence that looks particularly excellent, be sure to blot it out." In like manner, under milder phraseology, and with a meaning purposely much wider, a living Thinker has taught us: 'Of the Wrong we are always conscious, of the Right never.'

But if such is the law with regard to Speculation and the Intellectual power of man, much more is it with regard to Conduct, and the power, manifested chiefly therein, which we name moral. 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:' whisper not to thy own heart, How worthy is this action; for then it is already becoming worthless. The good man is he who *works* continually in welldoing; to whom welldoing is as his natural existence, awakening no astonishment, requiring no commentary; but there, like a thing of course, and as if it could not but be so. Self-contemplation, on the other hand, is infallibly the symptom of disease, be it or be it not the sign of cure. An unhealthy Virtue is one that consumes itself to leanness in repenting and anxiety; or, still worse, that inflates itself into dropsical boastfulness and vainglory: either way, there is a self-seeking; an unprofitable looking behind us to measure the way we have made: whereas the sole concern is to walk continually forward, and make more way. If in any sphere of man's life, then in the Moral sphere, as the inmost and most vital of all, it is good that there be wholeness; that there be unconsciousness, which is the evidence of this. Let the free, reasonable Will, which dwells in us, as in our Holy of Holies, be indeed free, and obeyed like a Divinity, as is its right and its effort: the perfect obedience will be the silent one. Such perhaps were the sense of that maxim, enunciating, as is usual, but the half of a truth: To say that we have a clear conscience, is to utter a solecism;

had we never sinned, we should have had no conscience. Were defeat unknown, neither would victory be celebrated by songs of triumph.

This, true enough, is an ideal, impossible state of being; yet ever the goal towards which our actual state of being strives; which it is the more perfect the nearer it can approach. Nor, in our actual world, where Labour must often prove *in*effectual, and thus in all senses Light alternate with Darkness, and the nature of an ideal Morality be much modified, is the case, thus far, materially different. It is a fact which escapes no one, that, generally speaking, whoso is acquainted with his worth has but a little stock to cultivate acquaintance with. Above all, the public acknowledgment of such acquaintance, indicating that it has reached quite an intimate footing, bodes ill. Already, to the popular judgment, he who talks much about Virtue in the abstract begins to be suspect; it is shrewdly guessed that where there is great preaching, there will be little almsgiving. Or again, on a wider scale, we can remark that ages of Heroism are not ages of Moral Philosophy; Virtue, when it can be philosophised of, has become aware of itself, is sickly and beginning to decline. A spontaneous habitual all-pervading spirit of Chivalrous Valour shrinks together and perks itself up into shrivelled Points of Honour: humane Courtesy and Nobleness of mind dwindle into punctilious Politeness, 'avoiding meats;' 'paying tithe of mint and anise, neglecting the weightier matters of the law.' Goodness, which was a rule to itself, must now appeal to Precept, and seek strength from Sanctions; the Freewill no longer reigns unquestioned and by divine right, but like a mere earthly sovereign, by expediency, by Rewards and Punishments: or rather, let us say, the Freewill, so far as may be, has abdicated and withdrawn into the dark, and a spectral nightmare of a Necessity usurps its throne; for now that mysterious Self-impulse of the whole man, heaven-inspired, and in all senses partaking of the Infinite, being captiously questioned in a finite dialect, and answering, as it needs must, by silence,—is conceived as non-extant, and only the outward Mechanism of it remains acknowledged: of Volition, except as the synonym of

Desire, we hear nothing; of 'Motives,' without any Mover, more than enough.

So too, when the generous Affections have become wellnigh paralytic, we have the reign of Sentimentality. The greatness, the profitableness, at any rate the extremely ornamental nature of high feeling, and the luxury of doing good; charity, love, self-forgetfulness, devotedness and all manner of godlike magnanimity,—are everywhere insisted on, and pressingly inculcated in speech and writing, in prose and verse; Socinian Preachers proclaim 'Benevolence' to all the four winds, and have TRUTH engraved on their watch-seals: unhappily with little or no effect. Were the limbs in right walking order, why so much demonstrating of motion? The barrenest of all mortals is the Sentimentalist. Granting even that he were sincere, and did not wilfully deceive us, or without first deceiving himself, what good is in him? Does he not lie there as a perpetual lesson of despair, and type of bedrid valetudinarian impotence? His is emphatically a Virtue that has become, through every fibre, conscious of itself; it is all sick, and feels as if it were made of glass, and durst not touch or be touched: in the shape of work, it can do nothing; at the utmost, by incessant nursing and caudling, keep itself alive. At the last stage of all, when Virtue, properly so called, has ceased to be practised, and become extinct, and a mere remembrance, we have the era of Sophists, descanting of its existence, proving it, denying it, mechanically 'accounting' for it; —as dissectors and demonstrators cannot operate till once the body be dead.

Thus is true Moral genius, like true Intellectual, which indeed is but a lower phasis thereof, 'ever a secret to itself.' The healthy moral nature loves Goodness, and without wonder wholly lives in it: the unhealthy makes love to it, and would fain get to live in it; or, finding such courtship fruitless, turns round, and not without contempt abandons it. These curious relations of the Voluntary and Conscious to the Involuntary and Unconscious, and the small proportion which, in all departments of our life, the former bears to the latter,—might lead us into deep questions of Psychology and Phys-

iology: such, however, belong not to our present object. Enough, if the fact itself become apparent, that Nature so meant it with us; that in this wise we are made. We may now say, that view man's individual Existence under what aspect we will, under the highest spiritual, as under the merely animal aspect, everywhere the grand vital energy, while in its sound state, is an unseen unconscious one; or, in the words of our old Aphorism, 'the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick.'

To understand man, however, we must look beyond the individual man and his actions or interests, and view him in combination with his fellows. It is in Society that man first feels what he is; first becomes what he can be. In Society an altogether new set of spiritual activities are evolved in him, and the old immeasurably quickened and strengthened. Society is the genial element wherein his nature first lives and grows; the solitary man were but a small portion of himself, and must continue forever folded in, stunted and only half alive. 'Already,' says a deep Thinker, with more meaning than will disclose itself at once, 'my opinion, my conviction, gains *infinitely* in strength and sureness, the moment a second mind has adopted it.' Such, even in its simplest form, is association; so wondrous the communion of soul with soul as directed to the mere act of Knowing! In other higher acts, the wonder is still more manifest; as in that portion of our being which we name the Moral: for properly, indeed, all communion is of a moral sort, whereof such intellectual communion (in the act of knowing) is itself an example. But with regard to Morals strictly so called, it is in Society, we might almost say, that Morality begins; here at least it takes an altogether new form, and on every side, as in living growth, expands itself. The Duties of Man to himself, to what is Highest in himself, make but the First Table of the Law: to the First Table is now superadded a Second, with the Duties of Man to his Neighbour; whereby also the significance of the First now assumes its true importance. Man has joined himself with man; soul acts and reacts on soul; a mystic miracu-

lous unfathomable Union establishes itself; Life, in all its elements, has become intensated, consecrated. The lightning-spark of Thought generated, or say rather heaven-kindled, in the solitary mind, awakens its express likeness in another mind, in a thousand other minds, and all blaze up together in combined fire; reverberated from mind to mind, fed also with fresh fuel in each, it acquires incalculable new light as Thought, incalculable new heat as converted into Action. By and by, a common store of Thought can accumulate, and be transmitted as an everlasting possession: Literature, whether as preserved in the memory of Bards, in Runes and Hieroglyphs engraved on stone, or in Books of written or printed paper, comes into existence, and begins to play its wondrous part. Polities are formed; the weak submitting to the strong; with a willing loyalty, giving obedience that he may receive guidance: or say rather, in honour of our nature, the ignorant submitting to the wise; for so it is in all even the rudest communities, man never yields himself wholly to brute Force, but always to moral Greatness; thus the universal title of respect, from the Oriental *Sheik*, from the *Sachem* of the Red Indians, down to our English *Sir*, implies only that he whom we mean to honour is our *senior*. Last, as the crown and all-supporting keystone of the fabric, Religion arises. The devout meditation of the isolated man, which flitted through his soul, like a transient tone of Love and Awe from unknown lands, acquires certainty, continuance, when it is shared-in by his brother men. 'Where two or three are gathered together' in the name of the Highest, then first does the Highest, as it is written, 'appear among them to bless them;' then first does an Altar and act of united Worship open a way from Earth to Heaven; whereon, were it but a simple Jacob's-ladder, the heavenly Messengers will travel, with glad tidings and unspeakable gifts for men. Such is Society, the vital articulation of many individuals into a new collective individual: greatly the most important of man's attainments on this earth; that in which, and by virtue of which, all his other attainments and attempts find their arena, and have their value. Considered well, Society is the standing wonder of our existence; a true region of

the Supernatural; as it were, a second all-embracing Life, wherein our first individual Life becomes doubly and trebly alive, and whatever of Infinitude was in us bodies itself forth, and becomes visible and active.

To figure Society as endowed with life is scarcely a metaphor; but rather the statement of a fact by such imperfect methods as language affords. Look at it closely, that mystic Union, Nature's highest work with man, wherein man's volition plays an indispensable yet so subordinate a part, and the small Mechanical grows so mysteriously and indissolubly out of the infinite Dynamical, like Body out of Spirit,—is truly enough vital, what we can call vital, and bears the distinguishing character of life. In the same style also, we can say that Society has its periods of sickness and vigour, of youth, manhood, decrepitude, dissolution and new-birth; in one or other of which stages we may, in all times, and all places where men inhabit, discern it; and do ourselves, in this time and place, whether as coöperating or as contending, as healthy members or as diseased ones, to our joy and sorrow, form part of it. The question, What is the actual condition of Society? has in these days unhappily become important enough. No one of us is unconcerned in that question; but for the majority of thinking men a true answer to it, such is the state of matters, appears almost as the one thing needful. Meanwhile, as the true answer, that is to say, the complete and fundamental answer and settlement, often as it has been demanded, is nowhere forthcoming, and indeed by its nature is impossible, any honest approximation towards such is not without value. The feeblest light, or even so much as a more precise recognition of the darkness, which is the first step to attainment of light, will be welcome.

This once understood, let it not seem idle if we remark that here too our old Aphorism holds; that again in the Body Politic, as in the animal body, the sign of right performance is Unconsciousness. Such indeed is virtually the meaning of that phrase, 'artificial state of society,' as contrasted with the natural state, and indicating something so inferior to it. For, in all vital things, men distinguish an Artificial and a Natural;

founding on some dim perception or sentiment of the very truth we here insist on: the artificial is the conscious, mechanical; the natural is the unconscious, dynamical. Thus, as we have an artificial Poetry, and prize only the natural; so likewise we have an artificial Morality, an artificial Wisdom, an artificial Society. The artificial Society is precisely one that knows its own structure, its own internal functions; not in watching, not in knowing which, but in working outwardly to the fulfilment of its aim, does the wellbeing of a Society consist. Every Society, every Polity, has a spiritual principle; is the embodiment, tentative and more or less complete, of an Idea: all its tendencies of endeavour, specialities of custom, its laws, politics and whole procedure (as the glance of some Montesquieu, across innumerable superficial entanglements, can partly decipher), are prescribed by an Idea, and flow naturally from it, as movements from the living source of motion. This Idea, be it of devotion to a man or class of men, to a creed, to an institution, or even, as in more ancient times, to a piece of land, is ever a true Loyalty; has in it something of a religious, paramount, quite infinite character; it is properly the Soul of the State, its Life; mysterious as other forms of Life, and like these working secretly, and in a depth beyond that of consciousness.

Accordingly, it is not in the vigorous ages of a Roman Republic that Treatises of the Commonwealth are written: while the Decii are rushing with devoted bodies on the enemies of Rome, what need of preaching Patriotism? The virtue of Patriotism has already sunk from its pristine all-transcendent condition, before it has received a name. So long as the Commonwealth continues rightly athletic, it cares not to dabble in anatomy. Why teach obedience to the Sovereign; why so much as admire it, or separately recognise it, while a divine idea of Obedience perennially inspires all men? Loyalty, like Patriotism, of which it is a form, was not praised till it had begun to decline; the *Preux Chevaliers* first became rightly admirable, when 'dying for their king' had ceased to be a habit with chevaliers. For if the mystic significance of the State, let this be what it may, dwells vitally in

every heart, encircles every life as with a second higher life, how should it stand self-questioning? It must rush outward, and express itself by works. Besides, if perfect, it is there as by necessity, and does not excite inquiry: it is also by nature infinite, has no limits; therefore can be circumscribed by no conditions and definitions; cannot be reasoned of; except *musically*, or in the language of Poetry, cannot yet so much as be spoken of.

In those days, Society was what we name healthy, sound at heart. Not indeed without suffering enough; not without perplexities, difficulty on every side: for such is the appointment of man; his highest and sole blessedness is, that he toil, and know what to toil at: not in ease, but in united victorious labour, which is at once evil, and the victory over evil, does his Freedom lie. Nay, often, looking no deeper than such superficial perplexities of the early Time, historians have taught us that it was all one mass of contradiction and disease; and in the antique Republic, or feudal Monarchy, have seen only the confused chaotic quarry, not the robust labourer, or the stately edifice he was building of it. If Society, in such ages, had its difficulty, it had also its strength; if sorrowful masses of rubbish so encumbered it, the tough sinews to hurl them aside, with indomitable heart, were not wanting. Society went along without complaint; did not stop to scrutinise itself, to say, How well I perform, or, Alas, how ill! Men did not yet feel themselves to be 'the envy of surrounding nations;' and were enviable on that very account. Society was what we can call *whole*, in both senses of the word. The individual man was in himself a whole, or complete union; and could combine with his fellows as the living member of a greater whole. For all men, through their life, were animated by one great Idea: thus all efforts pointed one way, everywhere there was *wholeness*. Opinion and Action had not yet become disunited; but the former could still produce the latter, or attempt to produce it; as the stamp does its impression while the wax is not hardened. Thought, and the voice of thought were also a unison; thus, instead of Speculation, we had Poetry; Literature, in its rude utterance, was as yet a heroic

Song, perhaps too a devotional Anthem. Religion was everywhere; Philosophy lay hid under it, peacefully included in it. Herein, as in the life-centre of all, lay the true health and oneness. Only at a later era must Religion split itself into Philosophies; and thereby, the vital union of Thought being lost, disunion and mutual collision in all provinces of Speech and Action more and more prevail. For if the Poet or Priest, or by whatever title the inspired thinker may be named, is the sign of vigour and wellbeing; so likewise is the Logician, or uninspired thinker, the sign of disease, probably of decrepitude and decay. Thus, not to mention other instances, one of them much nearer hand,—so soon as Prophecy among the Hebrews had ceased, then did the reign of Argumentation begin; and the ancient Theocracy, in its Sadduceeisms and Phariseeisms, and vain jangling of sects and doctors, give token that the *soul* of it had fled, and that the *body* itself, by natural dissolution, 'with the old forces still at work, but working in reverse order,' was on the road to final disappearance.

We might pursue this question into innumerable other ramifications; and everywhere, under new shapes, find the same truth, which we here so imperfectly enunciate, disclosed; that throughout the whole world of man, in all manifestations and performances of his nature, outward and inward, personal and social, the Prefect, the Great is a mystery to itself, knows not itself; whatsoever does know itself is already little, and more or less imperfect. Or otherwise we may say, Unconsciousness belongs to pure unmixed life; Consciousness to a diseased mixture and conflict of life and death: Unconsciousness is a sign of creation; Consciousness, at best, that of manufacture. So deep, in this existence of ours, is the significance of Mystery. Well might the Ancients make Silence a god; for it is the element of all godhood, infinitude, or transcendental greatness; at once the source and the ocean wherein all such begins and ends. In the same sense too, have Poets sung 'Hymns to the Night;' as if Night were nobler than Day; as if Day were but a small motley-coloured

veil spread transiently over the infinite bosom of Night, and did but deform and hide from us its purely transparent, eternal deeps. So likewise have they spoken and sung as if Silence were the grand epitome and complete sum-total of all Harmony; and Death, what mortals call Death, properly the beginning of Life. Under such figures, since except in figures there is no speaking of the Invisible, have men endeavoured to express a great Truth;—a Truth, in our Times, as nearly as is perhaps possible, forgotten by the most; which nevertheless continues forever true, forever all-important, and will one day, under new figures, be again brought home to the bosoms of all.

But indeed, in a far lower sense, the rudest mind has still some intimation of the greatness there is in Mystery. If Silence was made a god of by the Ancients, he still continues a government-clerk among us Moderns. To all quacks, moreover, of what sort soever, the effect of Mystery is well known: here and there some Cagliostro, even in latter days, turns it to notable account: the blockhead also, who is ambitious, and has no talent, finds sometimes in 'the talent of silence,' a kind of succedaneum. Or again, looking on the opposite side of the matter, do we not see, in the common understanding of mankind, a certain distrust, a certain contempt of what is altogether self-conscious and mechanical? As nothing that is wholly seen through has other than a trivial character; so anything professing to be great, and yet wholly to see through itself, is already known to be false, and a failure. The evil repute your 'theoretical men' stand in, the acknowledged inefficiency of 'paper constitutions,' and all that class of objects, are instances of this. Experience often repeated, and perhaps a certain instinct of something far deeper that lies under such experiences, has taught men so much. They know beforehand, that the loud is generally the insignificant, the empty. Whatsoever can proclaim itself from the house-tops may be fit for the hawker, and for those multitudes that must needs buy of him; but for any deeper use, might as well continue unproclaimed. Observe too, how the converse of the proposition holds; how the insignificant,

the empty, is usually the loud; and, after the manner of a drum, is loud even because of its emptiness. The uses of some Patent Dinner Calefactor can be bruited abroad over the whole world in the course of the first winter; those of the Printing Press are not so well seen into for the first three centuries: the passing of the Select-Vestries Bill raises more noise and hopeful expectancy among mankind than did the promulgation of the Christian Religion. Again, and again, we say the great, the creative and enduring is ever a secret to itself; only the small, the barren and transient is otherwise.

If we now, with a practical medical view, examine, by this same test of Unconsciousness, the Condition of our own Era, and of man's Life therein, the diagnosis we arrive at is nowise of a flattering sort. The state of Society in our days is, of all possible states, the least an unconscious one: this is specially the Era when all manner of Inquiries into what was once the unfelt, involuntary sphere of man's existence, find their place, and, as it were, occupy the whole domain of thought. What, for example, is all this that we hear, for the last generation or two, about the Improvement of the Age, the Spirit of the Age, Destruction of Prejudice, Progress of the Species, and the March of Intellect, but an unhealthy state of self-sentience, self-survey; the precursor and prognostic of still worse health? That Intellect do march, if possible at double-quick time, is very desirable; nevertheless, why should she turn round at every stride, and cry: See you what a stride I have taken! Such a marching of Intellect is distinctly of the spavined kind; what the Jockeys call 'all action and no go.' Or at best, if we examine well, it is the marching of that gouty Patient, whom his Doctors had clapt on a metal floor artificially heated to the searing point, so that he was obliged to march, and did march with a vengeance—nowhither. Intellect did not awaken for the first time yesterday; but has been under way from Noah's Flood downwards: greatly her best progress, moreover, was in the old times, when she said nothing about it. In those

same 'dark ages,' Intellect (metaphorically as well as literally) could invent *glass*, which now she has enough ado to grind into *spectacles*. Intellect built not only Churches, but a Church, *the* Church, based on this firm Earth, yet reaching up, and leading up, as high as Heaven; and now it is all she can do to keep its doors bolted, that there be no tearing of the Surplices, no robbery of the Alms-box. She built a Senate-house likewise, glorious in its kind; and now it costs her a wellnigh mortal effort to sweep it clear of vermin, and get the roof made rain-tight.

But the truth is, with Intellect, as with most other things, we are now passing from that first or boastful stage of Self-sentience into the second or painful one: out of these often-asseverated declarations that 'our system is in high order,' we come now, by natural sequence, to the melancholy conviction that it is altogether the reverse. Thus, for instance, in the matter of Government, the period of the 'Invaluable Constitution' must be followed by a Reform Bill; to laudatory Delolmes succeed objurgatory Benthams. At any rate, what Treatises on the Social Contract, on the Elective Franchise, the Rights of Man, the Rights of Property, Codifications, Institutions, Constitutions, have we not, for long years, groaned under! Or again, with a wider survey, consider those Essays on Man, Thoughts on Man, Inquiries concerning Man; not to mention Evidences of the Christian Faith, Theories of Poetry, Considerations on the Origin of Evil, which during the last century have accumulated on us to a frightful extent. Never since the beginning of Time was there, that we hear or read of, so intensely self-conscious a Society. Our whole relations to the Universe and to our fellow-man have become an Inquiry, a Doubt; nothing will go on of its own accord, and do its function quietly; but all things must be probed into, the whole working of man's world be anatomically studied. Alas, anatomically studied, that it may be medically aided! Till at length indeed, we have come to such a pass, that except in this same *medicine*, with its artifices and appliances, few can so much as imagine any strength or hope to remain for us. The whole Life of Society must now be carried on by drugs:

doctor after after doctor appears with his nostrum, of Co-operative Societies, Universal Suffrage, Cottage-and-Cow systems, Repression of Population, Vote by Ballot. To such height has the dyspepsia of Society reached; as indeed the constant grinding internal pain, or from time to time the mad spasmodic throes, of all Society do otherwise too mournfully indicate.

Far be it from us to attribute, as some unwise persons do, the disease itself to this unhappy sensation that there is a disease! The Encyclopedists did not produce the troubles of France; but the troubles of France produced the Encyclopedists, and much else. The Self-consciousness is the symptom merely; nay, it is also the attempt towards cure. We record the fact, without special censure; not wondering that Society should feel itself, and in all ways complain of aches and twinges, for it has suffered enough. Napoleon was but a Job's-comforter, when he told his wounded Staff-officer, twice unhorsed by cannon-balls, and with half his limbs blown to pieces: "*Vous vous écoutez trop!*"

On the outward, as it were, Physical diseases of Society, it were beside our purpose to insist here. These are diseases which he who runs may read; and sorrow over, with or without hope. Wealth has accumulated itself into masses; and Poverty, also in accumulation enough, lies impassably separated from it; opposed, uncommunicating, like forces in positive and negative poles. The gods of this lower world sit aloft on glittering thrones, less happy than Epicurus's gods, but as indolent, as impotent; while the boundless living chaos of Ignorance and Hunger welters terrific, in its dark fury, under their feet. How much among us might be likened to a whited sepulchre; outwardly all pomp and strength; but inwardly full of horror and despair and dead-men's bones! Iron highways, with their wains firewinged, are uniting all ends of the firm Land; quays and moles, with their innumerable stately fleets, tame the Ocean into our pliant bearer of burdens; Labour's thousand arms, of sinew and of metal, all-conquering everywhere, from the tops of the mountain down to the depths of the mine and the cav-

erns of the sea, ply unweariedly for the service of man: yet man remains unserved. He has subdued this Planet, his habitation and inheritance; yet reaps no profit from the victory. Sad to look upon: in the highest stage of civilisation, nine-tenths of mankind must struggle in the lowest battle of savage or even animal man, the battle against Famine. Countries are rich, prosperous in all manner of increase, beyond example: but the Men of those countres are poor, needier than ever of all sustenance outward and inward; of Belief, of Knowledge, of Money, of Food. The rule, *Sic vos non vobis*, never altogether to be got rid of in men's Industry, now presses with such incubus weight, that Industry must shake it off, or utterly be strangled under it; and, alas, can as yet but gasp and rave, and aimlessly struggle, like one in the final deliration. Thus Change, or the inevitable approach of Change, is manifest everywhere. In one Country we have seen lava-torrents of fever-frenzy envelop all things; Government succeed Government, like the phantasms of a dying brain. In another Country, we can even now see, in maddest alternation, the peasant governed by such guidance as this: To labour earnestly one month in raising wheat, and the next month labour earnestly in burning it. So that Society, were it not by nature immortal, and its death ever a new-birth, might appear, as it does in the eyes of some, to be sick to dissolution, and even now writhing in its last agony. Sick enough we must admit it to be, with disease enough, a whole nosology of diseases; wherein he perhaps is happiest that is not called to prescribe as physician;—wherein, however, one small piece of policy, that of summoning the Wisest in the Commonwealth, by the sole method yet known or thought of, to come together and with their whole soul consult for it, might, but for late tedious experiences, have seemed unquestionable enough.

But leaving this, let us rather look within, into the Spiritual condition of Society, and see what aspects and prospects offer themselves there. For after all, it is there properly that the secret and origin of the whole is to be sought: the Physical derangements of Society are but the image and im-

press of its Spiritual; while the heart continues sound, all other sickness is superficial, and temporary. False Action is the fruit of false Speculation; let the spirit of Society be free and strong, that is to say, let true Principles inspire the members of Society, then neither can disorders accumulate in its Practice; each disorder will be promptly, faithfully inquired into, and remedied as it arises. But alas, with us the Spiritual condition of Society is no less sickly than the Physical. Examine man's internal world, in any of its social relations and performances, here too all seems diseased self-consciousness, collision and mutually-destructive struggle. Nothing acts from within outwards in undivided healthy force; everything lies impotent, lamed, its force turned inwards, and painfully 'listens to itself.'

To begin with our highest Spiritual function, with Religion, we might ask, Whither has Religion now fled? Of Churches and their establishments we here say nothing: nor of the unhappy domains of Unbelief, and how innumerable men, blinded in their minds, must 'live without God in the world;' but, taking the fairest side of the matter, we ask, What is the nature of that same Religion, which still lingers in the hearts of the few who are called, and call themselves, specially the Religious? Is it a healthy religion, vital, unconscious of itself; that shines forth spontaneously in doing of the Work, or even in preaching of the Word? Unhappily, no. Instead of heroic martyr Conduct, and inspired and soul-inspiring Eloquence, whereby Religion itself were brought home to our living bosoms, to live and reign there, we have 'Discourses on the Evidences,' endeavouring, with smallest result, to make it probable that such a thing as Religion exists. The most enthusiastic Evangelicals do not preach a Gospel, but keep describing how it should and might be preached: to awaken the sacred fire of faith, as by a sacred contagion, is not their endeavour; but, at most, to describe how Faith shows and acts, and scientifically distinguish true Faith from false. Religion, like all else, is conscious of itself, listens to itself; it becomes less and less creative, vital; more and more mechanical. Considered as a whole, the

Christian Religion, of late ages has been continually dissipating itself into Metaphysics; and threatens now to disappear, as some rivers do, in deserts of barren sand.

Of Literature, and its deep-seated, wide-spread maladies, why speak? Literature is but a branch of Religion, and always participates in its character: however, in our time, it is the only branch that still shows any greenness; and, as some think, must one day become the main stem. Now, apart from the subterranean and tartarean regions of Literature;—leaving out of view the frightful, scandalous statistics of Puffing, the mystery of Slander, Falsehood, Hatred and other convulsion-work of rabid Imbecility, and all that has rendered Literature on that side a perfect 'Babylon the mother of Abominations,' in very deed making the world 'drunk' with the wine of her iniquity;—forgetting all this, let us look only to the regions of the upper air; to such Literature as can be said to have some attempt towards truth in it, some tone of music, and if it be not poetical, to hold of the poetical. Among other characteristics, is not this manifest enough: that it knows itself? Spontaneous devotedness to the object, being wholly possessed by the object, what we can call Inspiration, has wellnigh ceased to appear in Literature. Which melodious Singer forgets that he is singing melodiously? We have not the love of greatness, but the love of the love of greatness. Hence infinite Affectations, Distractions; in every case inevitable Error. Consider, for one example, this peculiarity of Modern Literature, the sin that has been named View-hunting. In our elder writers, there are no paintings of scenery for its own sake; no euphuistic gallantries with Nature, but a constant heartlove for her, a constant dwelling in communion with her. View-hunting, with so much else that is of kin to it, first came decisively into action through the *Sorrows of Werter;* which wonderful Performance, indeed, may in many senses be regarded as the progenitor of all that has since become popular in Literature; whereof, in so far as concerns spirit and tendency, it still offers the most instructive image; for nowhere, except in its own country, above all in the mind of its illustrious Author, has it yet fallen wholly

obsolete. Scarcely ever, till that late epoch, did any worshipper of Nature become entirely aware that he was worshipping, much to his own credit; and think of saying to himself: Come let us make a description! Intolerable enough: when every puny whipster draws out his pencil, and insists on painting you a scene; so that the instant you discern such a thing as 'wavy outline,' 'mirror of the lake,' 'stern headland,' or the like, in any Book, you must timorously hasten on; and scarcely the Author of Waverley himself can tempt you not to skip.

Nay, is not the deceased self-conscious state of Literature disclosed in this one fact, which lies so near us here, the prevalence of Reviewing! Sterne's wish for a reader 'that would give up the reins of his imagination into his author's hands, and be pleased he knew not why, and cared not wherefore,' might lead him a long journey now. Indeed, for our best class of readers, the chief pleasure, a very stinted one, is this same knowing of the Why; which many a Kames and Bossu has been, ineffectually enough, endeavouring to teach us: till at last these also have laid down their trade; and now your Reviewer is a mere *taster;* who tastes, and says, by the evidence of such palate, such tongue, as he has got, It is good, It is bad. Was it thus that the French carried out certain inferior creatures on their Algerine Expedition, to taste the wells for them, and try whether they were poisoned? Far be it from us to disparage our own craft, whereby we have our living! Only we must note these things: that Reviewing spreads with strange vigour; that such a man as Byron reckons the Reviewer and the Poet equal; that at the last Leipzig Fair, there was advertised a Review of Reviews. By and by it will be found that all Literature has become one boundless self-devouring Review; and as in London routs, we have to *do* nothing, but only to *see* others do nothing.—Thus does Literature also, like a sick thing, superabundantly 'listen to itself.'

No less is this unhealthy symptom manifest, if we cast a glance on our Philosophy, on the character of our speculative Thinking. Nay already, as above hinted, the mere existence and necessity of a Philosophy is an evil. Man is sent hither

not to question, but to work; 'the end of man,' it was long ago written, 'is an Action, not a Thought.' In the perfect state, all Thought were but the picture and inspiring symbol of Action; Philosophy, except as Poetry and Religion, would have no being. And yet how, in this imperfect state, can it be avoided, can it be dispensed with? Man stands as in the centre of Nature; his fraction of Time encircled by Eternity, his handbreadth of Space encircled by Infinitude: how shall he forbear asking himself, What am I; and Whence; and Whither? How too, except in slight partial hints, in kind asseverations and assurances, such as a mother quiets her fretfully inquisitive child with, shall he get answer to such inquiries?

The disease of Metaphysics, accordingly, is a perennial one. In all ages, those questions of Death and Immortality, Origin of Evil, Freedom and Necessity, must, under new forms, anew make their appearance; ever, from time to time, must the attempt to shape for ourselves some Theorem of the Universe be repeated. And ever unsuccessfully: for what Theorem of the Infinite can the Finite render complete? We, the whole species of Mankind, and our whole existence and history, are but a floating speck in the illimitable ocean of the All; yet *in* that ocean; indissoluble portion thereof; partaking of its infinite tendencies: borne this way and that by its deep-swelling tides, and grand ocean currents;—of which what faintest chance is there that we should ever exhaust the significance, ascertain the goings and comings? A region of Doubt, therefore, hovers forever in the background; in Action alone can we have certainty. Nay properly Doubt is the indispensable inexhaustible material whereon Action works, which Action has to fashion into Certainty and Reality; only on a canvas of Darkness, such is man's way of being, could the many-coloured picture of our Life paint itself and shine.

Thus if our eldest system of Metaphysics is as old as the *Book of Genesis*, our latest is that of Mr. Thomas Hope, published only within the current year. It is a chronic malady that of Metaphysics, as we said, and perpetually recurs on us. At the utmost, there is a better and a worse in it; a stage of

convalescence, and a stage of relapse with new sickness: these forever succeed each other, as is the nature of all Life-movement here below. The first, or convalescent stage, we might also name that of Dogmatical or Constructive Metaphysics; when the mind constructively endeavours to scheme out, and assert for itself an actual Theorem of the Universe, and therewith for a time rests satisfied. The second or sick stage might be called that of Sceptical or Inquisitory Metaphysics; when the mind having widened its sphere of vision, the existing Theorem of the Universe no longer answers the phenomena, no longer yields contentment; but must be torn in pieces, and certainty anew sought for in the endless realms of denial. All Theologies and sacred Cosmogonies belong, in some measure, to the first class; in all Pyrrhonism, from Pyrrho down to Hume and the innumerable disciples of Hume, we have instances enough of the second. In the former, so far as it affords satisfaction, a temporary anodyne to doubt, an arena for wholesome action, there may be much good; indeed in this case, it holds rather of Poetry than of Metaphysics, might be called Inspiration rather than Speculation. The latter is Metaphysics proper; a pure, unmixed, though from time to time a necessary evil.

For truly, if we look into it, there is no more fruitless endeavour than this same, which the Metaphysician proper toils in: to educe Conviction out of Negation. How, by merely testing and rejecting what is not, shall we ever attain knowledge of what is? Metaphysical Speculation, as it begins in No or Nothingness, so it must needs end in Nothingness; circulates and must circulate in endless vortices; creating, swallowing—itself. Our being is made up of Light and Darkness, the Light resting on the Darkness, and balancing it; everywhere there is Dualism, Equipoise; a perpetual Contradiction dwells in us: "Where shall I place myself to escape from my own shadow?" Consider it well, Metaphysics is the attempt of the mind to rise above the mind; to environ, and shut in, or as we say, *comprehend* the mind. Hopeless struggle, for the wisest, as for the foolishest! What strength of sinew, or athletic skill, will enable the stoutest athlete to fold

his own body in his arms, and, by lifting, lift up *himself?* The Irish Saint swam the Channel 'carrying his head in his teeth;' but the feat has never been imitated.

That this is the age of Metaphysics, in the proper, or sceptical Inquisitory sense; that there was a necessity for its being such an age, we regard as our indubitable misfortune. From many causes, the arena of free Activity has long been narrowing, that of sceptical Inquiry becoming more and more universal, more and more perplexing. The Thought conducts not to the Deed; but in boundless chaos, self-devouring, engenders monstrosities, fantasms, fire-breathing chimeras. Profitable Speculation were this: What is to be done; and How is it to be done? But with us not so much as the What can be got sight of. For some generations, all Philosophy has been a painful, captious, hostile question towards everything in the Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath: Why art thou there? Till at length it has come to pass that the worth and authenticity of all things seems dubitable or deniable: our best effort must be unproductively spent not in working, but in ascertaining our mere Whereabout, and so much as whether we are to work at all. Doubt, which, as was said, ever hangs in the background of our world, has now become our middle-ground and foreground; whereon, for the time, no fair Life-picture can be painted, but only the dark air-canvas itself flow round us, bewildering and benighting.

Nevertheless, doubt as we will, man is actually Here; not to ask questions but to do work: in this time, as in all times, it must be the heaviest evil for him, if his faculty of Action lie dormant, and only that of sceptical Inquiry exert itself. Accordingly, whoever looks abroad upon the world, comparing the Past with the Present, may find that the practical condition of man in these days is one of the saddest; burdened with miseries which are in a considerable degree peculiar. In no time was man's life what he calls a happy one; in no time can it be so. A perpetual dream there has been of Paradises, and some luxurious Lubberland, where the brooks should run wine, and the trees bend with ready-baked viands; but it was a dream merely; an impossible dream. Suffering, contradic-

tion, error, have their quite perennial, and even indispensable abode in this Earth. Is not labour the inheritance of man? And what labour for the present is joyous, and not grievous? Labour, effort, is the very interruption of that ease, which man foolishly enough fancies to be his happiness; and yet without labour there were no ease, no rest, so much as conceivable. Thus Evil, what we call Evil, must ever exist while man exists: Evil, in the widest sense we can give it, is precisely the dark, disordered material out of which man's Freewill has to create an edifice of order and Good. Ever must Pain urge us to Labour; and only in free Effort can any blessedness be imagined for us.

But if man has, in all ages, had enough to encounter, there has, in most civilised ages, been an inward force vouchsafed him, whereby the pressure of things outward might be withstood. Obstruction abounded; but Faith also was not wanting. It is by Faith that man removes mountains: while he had Faith, his limbs might be wearied with toiling, his back galled with bearing; but the heart within him was peaceable and resolved. In the thickest gloom there burnt a lamp to guide him. If he struggled and suffered, he felt that it even should be so; knew for what he was suffering and struggling. Faith gave him an inward Willingness; a world of Strength wherewith to front a world of Difficulty. The true wretchedness lies here: that the Difficulty remain and the Strength be lost; that Pain cannot relieve itself in free Effort; that we have the Labour, and want the Willingness. Faith strengthens us, enlightens us, for all endeavours and endurances; with Faith we can do all, and dare all, and life itself has a thousand times been joyfully given away. But the sum of man's misery is even this, that he feel himself crushed under the Juggernaut wheels, and know that Juggernaut is no divinity, but a dead mechanical idol.

Now this is specially the misery which has fallen on man in our Era. Belief, Faith has wellnigh vanished from the world. The youth on awakening in this wondrous Universe, no longer finds a competent theory of its wonders. Time was, when if he asked himself, What is man, What are the duties of man?

the answer stood ready written for him. But now the ancient 'ground-plan of the All' belies itself when brought into contact with reality; Mother Church has, to the most, become a superannuated Step-mother, whose lessons go disregarded; or are spurned at, and scornfully gainsaid. For Young Valour and thirst of Action no ideal Chivalry invites to heroism, prescribes what is heroic: the old ideal of Manhood has grown obsolete, and the new is still invisible to us, and we grope after it in darkness, one clutching this phantom, another that; Werterism, Byronism, even Brummelism, each has its day. For Contemplation and love of Wisdom, no Cloister now opens its religious shades; the Thinker must, in all senses, wander homeless, too often aimless, looking up to a Heaven which is dead for him, round to an Earth which is deaf. Action, in those old days, was easy, was voluntary, for the divine worth of human things lay acknowledged; Speculation was wholesome, for it ranged itself as the handmaid of Action; what could not so range itself died out by its natural death, by neglect. Loyalty still hallowed obedience, and made rule noble; there was still something to be loyal to: the Godlike stood embodied under many a symbol in men's interests and business; the Finite shadowed forth the Infinite; Eternity looked through Time. The Life of man was encompassed and overcanopied by a glory of Heaven, even as his dwelling-place by the azure vault.

How changed in these new days! Truly may it be said, the Divinity has withdrawn from the Earth; or veils himself in that wide-wasting Whirlwind of a departing Era, wherein the fewest can discern his goings. Not Godhead, but an iron, ignoble circle of Necessity embraces all things; binds the youth of these times into a sluggish thrall, or else exasperates him into a rebel. Heroic Action is paralysed; for what worth now remains unquestionable with him? At the fervid period when his whole nature cries aloud for Action, there is nothing sacred under whose banner he can act; the course and kind and conditions of free Action are all but undiscoverable. Doubt storms-in on him through every avenue; inquiries of the deepest, painfullest sort must be engaged with; and the

invincible energy of young years waste itself in sceptical, suicidal cavillings; in passionate 'questionings of Destiny,' whereto no answer will be returned.

For men, in whom the old perennial principle of Hunger (be it Hunger of the poor Day-drudge who stills it with eighteenpence a-day, or of the ambitious Placehunter who can nowise still it with so little) suffices to fill up existence, the case is bad; but not the worst. These men have an aim, such as it is; and can steer towards it, with chagrin enough truly; yet, as their hands are kept full, without desperation. Unhappier are they to whom a higher instinct has been given; who struggle to be persons, not machines; to whom the Universe is not a warehouse, or at best a fancy-bazaar, but a mystic temple and hall of doom. For such men there lie properly two courses open. The lower, yet still an estimable class, take up with worn-out Symbols of the Godlike; keep trimming and truckling between these and Hypocrisy, purblindly enough, miserably enough. A numerous intermediate class end in Denial; and form a theory that there is no theory; that nothing is certain in the world, except this fact of Pleasure being pleasant; so they try to realise what trifling modicum of Pleasure they can come at, and to live contented therewith, winking hard. Of these we speak not here; but only of the second nobler class, who also have dared to say No, and cannot yet say Yea; but feel that in the No they dwell as in a Golgotha, where life enters not, where peace is not appointed them. Hard, for most part, is the fate of such men; the harder the nobler they are. In dim forecastings, wrestles within them the 'Divine Idea of the World,' yet will nowhere visibly reveal itself. They have to realise a Worship for themselves, or live unworshipping. The Godlike has vanished from the world; and they, by the strong cry of their soul's agony, like true wonder-workers, must again evoke its presence. This miracle is their appointed task; which they must accomplish, or die wretchedly: this miracle has been accomplished by such; but not in our land; our land yet knows not of it. Behold a Byron, in melodious tones, 'cursing his day:' he mistakes earthborn passionate Desire for heaven-inspired Free-

will: without heavenly loadstar, rushes madly into the dance of Meteoric lights that hover on the mad Mahlstrom; and goes down among its eddies. Hear a Shelley filling the earth with inarticulate wail; like the infinite, inarticulate grief and weeping of forsaken infants. A noble Friedrich Schlegel, stupefied in that fearful loneliness, as of a silenced battlefield, flies back to Catholicism; as a child might to its slain mother's bosom, and cling there. In lower regions, how many a poor Hazlitt must wander on God's verdant earth, like the Unblest on burning deserts; passionately dig wells, and draw up only the dry quicksand; believe that he is seeking Truth, yet only wrestle among endless Sophisms, doing desperate battle as with spectre-hosts; and die and make no sign!

To the better order of such minds any mad joy of Denial has long since ceased: the problem is not now to deny, but to ascertain and perform. Once in destroying the False, there was a certain inspiration; but now the genius of Destruction has done its work, there is now nothing more to destroy. The doom of the Old has long been pronounced, and irrevocable; the Old has passed away: but, alas, the New appears not in its stead; the Time is still in pangs of travail with the New. Man has walked by the light of conflagrations, and amid the sound of falling cities; and now there is darkness, and long watching till it be morning. The voice even of the faithful can but exclaim: 'As yet struggles the twelfth hour of the Night: birds of darkness are on the wing, spectres uproar, the dead walk, the living dream.—Thou, Eternal Providence, wilt cause the day to dawn!'[1]

Such being the condition, temporal and spiritual, of the world at our Epoch, can we wonder that the world 'listens to itself,' and struggles and writhes, everywhere externally and internally, like a thing in pain? Nay, is not even this unhealthy action of the world's Organisation, if the symptom of universal disease, yet also the symptom and sole means of restoration and cure? The effort of Nature, exerting her medicative force to cast out foreign impediments, and once more become One, become whole? In Practice, still more in

[1] Jean Paul's *Hesperus*. Vorrede.

Opinion, which is the precursor and prototype of Practice, there must needs be collision, convulsion; much has to be ground away. Thought must needs be Doubt and Inquiry, before it can again be Affirmation and Sacred Precept. Innumerable 'Philosophies of Man,' contending in boundless hubbub, must annihilate each other, before an inspired Poesy and Faith for Man can fashion itself together.

From this stunning hubbub, a true Babylonish confusion of tongues, we have here selected two Voices; less as objects of praise or condemnation, than as signs how far the confusion has reached, what prospect there is of its abating. Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures*, delivered at Dresden, and Mr. Hope's *Essay*, published in London, are the latest utterances of European Speculation: far asunder in external place, they stand at a still wider distance in inward purport; are, indeed, so opposite and yet so cognate that they may, in many senses, represent the two Extremes of our whole modern system of Thought; and be said to include between them all the Metaphysical Philosophies, so often alluded to here, which, of late times, from France, Germany, England, have agitated and almost overwhelmed us. Both in regard to matter and to form, the relation of these two Works is significant enough.

Speaking first of their cognate qualities, let us remark, not without emotion, one quite extraneous point of agreement; the fact that the Writers of both have departed from this world; they have now finished their search, and had all doubts resolved: while we listen to the voice, the tongue that uttered it has gone silent forever. But the fundamental, all-pervading similarity lies in this circumstance, well worthy of being noted, that both these Philosophers are of the Dogmatic or Constructive sort: each in its way is a kind of Genesis; an endeavour to bring the Phenomena of man's Universe once more under some theoretic Scheme: in both there is a decided principle of unity; they strive after a result which shall be positive; their aim is not to question, but to establish. This, especially if we consider with what comprehensive concentrated force it is here exhibited, forms a new feature in such works.

Under all other aspects, there is the most irreconcilable opposition ; a staring contrariety, such as might provoke contrasts, were there far fewer points of comparison. If Schlegel's Work is the apotheosis of Spiritualism ; Hope's again is the apotheosis of Materialism : in the one, all Matter is evaporated into a Phenomenon, and terrestrial Life itself, with its whole doings and showings, held out as a Disturbance (*Zerrüttung*) produced by the *Zeitgeist* (Spirit of Time) ; in the other, Matter is distilled and sublimated into some semblance of Divinity : the one regards Space and Time as mere forms of man's mind, and without external existence or reality ; the other supposes Space and Time to be 'incessantly created,' and rayed in upon us like a sort of 'gravitation.' Such is their difference in respect of purport : no less striking is it in respect of manner, talent, success and all outward characteristics. Thus, if in Schlegel we have to admire the power of Words, in Hope we stand astonished, it might almost be said, at the want of an articulate Language. To Schlegel his Philosophic Speech is obedient, dextrous, exact, like a promptly ministering genius ; his names are so clear, so precise and vivid, that they almost (sometimes altogether) become things for him : with Hope there is no Philosophical Speech ; but a painful, confused stammering, and struggling after such ; or the tongue, as in dotish forgetfulness, maunders, low, long-winded, and speaks not the word intended, but another ; so that here the scarcely intelligible, in these endless convolutions, becomes the wholly unreadable ; and often we could ask, as that mad pupil did of his tutor in Philosophy, "But whether is Virtue a fluid, then, or a gas?" If the fact, that Schlegel, in the city of Dresden, could find audience for such high discourse, may excite our envy ; this other fact, that a person of strong powers, skilled in English Thought and master of its Dialect, could write the *Origin and Prospects of Man*, may painfully remind us of the reproach, that England has now no language for Meditation ; that England, the most calculative, is the least meditative, of all civilised countries.

It is not our purpose to offer any criticism of Schlegel's Book ; in such limits as were possible here, we should despair

of communicating even the faintest image of its significance. To the mass of readers, indeed, both among the Germans themselves, and still more elsewhere, it nowise addresses itself, and may lie forever sealed. We point it out as a remarkable document of the Time and of the Man; can recommend it, moreover, to all earnest Thinkers, as a work deserving their best regard; a work full of deep meditation, wherein the infinite mystery of Life, if not represented, is decisively recognized. Of Schlegel himself, and his character, and spiritual history, we can profess no thorough or final understanding; yet enough to make us view him with admiration and pity, nowise with harsh contemptuous censure; and must say, with clearest persuasion, that the outcry of his being 'a renegade,' and so forth, is but like other such outcries, a judgment where there was neither jury, nor evidence, nor judge. The candid reader, in this Book itself, to say nothing of all the rest, will find traces of a high, far-seeing, earnest spirit, to whom 'Austrian Pensions,' and the Kaiser's crown, and Austria altogether, were but a light matter to the finding and vitally appropriating of Truth. Let us respect the sacred mystery of a Person; rush not irreverently into man's Holy of Holies! Were the lost little one, as we said already, found 'sucking its dead mother, on the field of carnage,' could it be other than a spectacle for tears? A solemn mournful feeling comes over us when we see this last Work of Friedrich Schlegel, the unwearied seeker, end abruptly in the middle; and, as if he *had not* yet found, as if emblematically of much, end with an '*Aber*—,' with a 'But—!' This was the last word that came from the Pen of Friedrich Schlegel: about eleven at night he wrote it down, and there paused sick; at one in the morning, Time for him had merged itself in Eternity; he was, as we say, no more.

Still less can we attempt any criticism of Mr. Hope's new Book of Genesis. Indeed, under any circumstances, criticism of it were now impossible. Such an utterance could only be responded to in peals of laughter; and laughter sounds hollow and hideous through the vaults of the dead. Of this monstrous Anomaly, where all sciences are heaped and hud-

dled together, and the principles of all are, with a childlike innocence, plied hither and thither, or wholly abolished in case of need; where the First Cause is figured as a huge Circle, with nothing to do but radiate 'gravitation' towards its centre; and so construct a Universe, wherein all, from the lowest cucumber with its coolness, up to the highest seraph with his love, were but 'gravitation,' direct or reflex, 'in more or less central globes,'—what can we say, except, with sorrow and shame, that it could have originated nowhere save in England? It is a general agglomerate of all facts, notions, whims and observations, as they lie in the brain of an English gentleman; as an English gentleman, of unusual thinking power, is led to fashion them, in his schools and in his world: all these thrown into the crucible, and if not fused, yet soldered or conglutinated with boundless patience; and now tumbled out here, heterogeneous, amorphous, unspeakable, a world's wonder. Most melancholy must we name the whole business; full of long-continued thought, earnestness, loftiness of mind; not without glances into the Deepest, a constant fearless endeavour after truth; and with all this nothing accomplished, but the perhaps absurdest Book written in our century by a thinking man. A shameful Abortion; which, however, need not now be smothered or mangled, for it is already dead; only, in our love and sorrowing reverence for the writer of *Anastasius*, and the heroic seeker of Light, though not bringer thereof, let it be buried and forgotten.

For ourselves, the loud discord which jars in these two Works, in innumerable works of the like import, and generally in all the Thought and Action of this period, does not any longer utterly confuse us. Unhappy who, in such a time, felt not, at all conjunctures, ineradicably in his heart the knowledge that a God made this Universe, and a Demon not! And shall Evil always prosper, then? Out of all Evil comes Good; and no Good that is possible but shall one day be real. Deep and sad as is our feeling that we stand yet in the bodeful Night; equally deep, indestructible is our assurance that the Morning also will not fail. Nay already, as we look round,

streaks of a dayspring are in the east; it is dawning; when the time shall be fulfilled, it will be day. The progress of man towards higher and nobler developments of whatever is highest and noblest in him, lies not only prophesied to Faith, but now written to the eye of Observation, so that he who runs may read.

One great step of progress, for example, we should say in actual circumstances, was this same; the clear ascertainment that we are in progress. About the grand Course of Providence, and his final Purposes with us, we can know nothing, or almost nothing: man begins in darkness, ends in darkness; mystery is everywhere around us and in us, under our feet, among our hands. Nevertheless so much has become evident to every one, that this wondrous Mankind is advancing somewhither; that at least all human things are, have been and forever will be, in Movement and Change;—as, indeed, for beings that exist in Time, by virtue of Time, and are made of Time, might have been long since understood. In some provinces, it is true, as in Experimental Science, this discovery is an old one; but in most others it belongs wholly to these latter days. How often, in former ages, by eternal Creeds, eternal Forms of Government and the like, has it been attempted, fiercely enough, and with destructive violence, to chain the Future under the Past; and say to the Providence, whose ways with man are mysterious, and through the great deep: Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther! A wholly insane attempt; and for man himself, could it prosper, the frightfullest of all enchantments, a very Life-in-Death. Man's task here below, the destiny of every individual man, is to be in turns Apprentice and Workman; or say rather, Scholar, Teacher, Discoverer: by nature he has a strength for learning, for imitating; but also a strength for acting, for knowing on his own account. Are we not in a world seen to be Infinite; the relations lying closest together modified by those latest discovered and lying farthest asunder? Could you ever spell-bind man into a scholar merely, so that he had nothing to discover, to correct; could you ever establish a Theory of the Universe that were entire, unimprovable, and which needed only to be got by heart; man then were spiritually defunct,

the Species we now name Man had ceased to exist. But the gods, kinder to us than we are to ourselves, have forbidden such suicidal acts. As Phlogiston is displaced by Oxygen, and the Epicycles of Ptolemy by the Ellipses of Kepler; so does Paganism give place to Catholicism, Tyranny to Monarchy, and Feudalism to Representative Government,—where also the process does not stop. Perfection of Practice, like completeness of Opinion, is always approaching, never arrived; Truth, in the words of Schiller, *immer wird, nie est;* never *is*, always *is a-being.*

Sad, truly, were our condition did we know but this, that Change is universal and inevitable. Launched into a dark shoreless sea of Pyrrhonism, what would remain for us but to sail aimless, hopeless; or make madly merry, while the devouring Death had not yet engulfed us? As indeed, we have seen many, and still see many do. Nevertheless so stands it not. The venerator of the Past (and to what pure heart is the Past, in that 'moonlight of memory,' other than sad and holy?) sorrows not over its departure, as one utterly bereaved. The true Past departs not, nothing that was worthy in the Past departs; no Truth or Goodness realised by man ever dies, or can die; but is all still here, and, recognised or not, lives and works through endless changes. If all things, to speak in the German dialect, are discerned by us, and exist for us, in an element of Time, and therefore of Mortality and Mutability; yet Time itself reposes on Eternity; the truly Great and Transcendental has its basis and substance in Eternity: stands revealed to us as Eternity in a vesture of Time. Thus in all Poetry, Worship, Art, Society, as one form passes into another, nothing is lost: it is but the superficial, as it were the *body* only, that grows obsolete and dies; under the mortal body lies a *soul* which is immortal; which anew incarnates itself in fairer revelation; and the Present is the living sum-total of the whole Past.

In Change, therefore, there is nothing terrible, nothing supernatural: on the contrary, it lies in the very essence of our lot and life in this world. To-day is not yesterday: we ourselves change; how can our Works and Thoughts, if they are always to be the fittest, continue always the same? Change,

indeed, is painful; yet ever needful: and if Memory have its force and worth, so also has Hope. Nay, if we look well to it, what is all Derangement, and necessity of great Change, in itself such an evil, but the product simply of *increased resources* which the old *methods* can no longer administer; of new wealth which the old coffers will no longer contain? What is it, for example, that in our own day bursts asunder the bonds of ancient Political Systems, and perplexes all Europe with the fear of Change, but even this: the increase of social resources, which the old social methods will no longer sufficiently administer? The new omnipotence of the Steam-engine is hewing asunder quite other mountains than the physical. Have not our economical distresses, those barnyard Conflagrations themselves, the frightfullest madness of our mad epoch, their rise also in what is a real increase: increase of Men; of human Force; properly, in such a Planet as ours, the most precious of all increases? It is true again, the ancient methods of administration will no longer suffice. Must the indomitable millions, full of old Saxon energy and fire, lie cooped up in this Western Nook, choking one another, as in a Blackhole of Calcutta, while a whole fertile untenanted Earth, desolate for want of the ploughshare, cries: Come and till me, come and reap me? If the ancient Captains can no longer yield guidance, new must be sought after: for the difficulty lies not in nature, but in artifice; the European Calcutta-Blackhole has no walls but air ones and paper ones.—So too, Scepticism itself, with its innumerable mischiefs, what is it but the sour fruit of a most blessed increase, that of Knowledge; a fruit too that will not always continue *sour?*

In fact, much as we have said and mourned about the unproductive prevalence of Metaphysics, it was not without some insight into the use that lies in them. Metaphysical Speculation, if a necessary evil, is the forerunner of much good. The fever of Scepticism must needs burn itself out, and burn out thereby the Impurities that caused it; then again will there be clearness, health. The principle of life, which now struggles painfully, in the outer, thin and barren domain of the Conscious or Mechanical, may then withdraw into its inner

sanctuaries, its abysses of mystery and miracle; withdraw deeper than ever into that domain of the unconscious, by nature infinite and inexhaustible; and creatively work there. From that mystic region, and from that alone, all wonders, all Poesies, and Religions, and Social Systems have proceeded: the like wonders, and greater and higher, lie slumbering there; and, brooded on by the spirit of the waters, will evolve themselves, and rise like exhalations from the Deep.

Of our Modern Metaphysics, accordingly, may not this already be said, that if they have produced no Affirmation, they have destroyed much Negation? It is a disease expelling a disease: the fire of Doubt, as above hinted, consuming away the Doubtful; that so the Certain come to light, and again lie visible on the surface. English or French Metaphysics, in reference to this last stage of the speculative process, are not what we allude to here; but only the Metaphysics of the Germans. In France or England, since the days of Diderot and Hume, though all thought has been of a sceptico-metaphysical texture, so far as there was any Thought, we have seen no Metaphysics; but only more or less ineffectual questionings whether such could be. In the Pyrrhonism of Hume and the Materialism of Diderot, Logic had, as it were, overshot itself, overset itself. Now, though the athlete, to use our old figure, cannot, by much lifting, lift up his own body, he may shift it out of a laming posture, and get to stand in a free one. Such a service have German Metaphysics done for man's mind. The second sickness of Speculation has abolished both itself and the first. Friedrich Schlegel complains much of the fruitlessness, the tumult and transiency of German as of all Metaphysics; and with reason. Yet in that wide-spreading, deep-whirling vortex of Kantism, so soon metamorphosed into Fichteism, Schellingism, and then as Hegelism, and Cousinism, perhaps finally evaporated, is not this issue visible enough. That Pyrrhonism and Materialism, themselves necessary phenomena in European culture, have disappeared; and a Faith in Religion has again become possible and inevitable for the scientific mind; and the word *Free*-thinker no longer means the Denier or Caviller, but the Believer, or the

Ready to believe? Nay, in the higher Literature of Germany, there already lies, for him that can read it, the beginning of a new revelation of the Godlike; as yet unrecognised by the mass of the world; but waiting there for recognition, and sure to find it when the fit hour comes. This age also is not wholly without its Prophets.

Again, under another aspect, if Utilitarianism, or Radicalism, or the Mechanical Philosophy, or by whatever name it is called, has still its long task to do; nevertheless we can now see through it and beyond it: in the better heads, even among us English, it has become obsolete; as in other countries, it has been, in such heads, for some forty or even fifty years. What sound mind among the French, for example, now fancies that men can be governed by 'Constitutions;' by the never so cunning mechanising of Self-interests, and all conceivable adjustments of checking and balancing; in a word, by the best possible solution of this quite insoluble and impossible problem, *Given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their united action?* Were not experiments enough of this kind tried before all Europe, and found wanting, when, in that doomsday of France, the infinite gulf of human Passion shivered asunder the thin rinds of Habit; and burst forth all-devouring, as in seas of Nether Fire? Which cunningly-devised 'Constitution,' constitutional, republican, democratic, sansculottic, could bind that raging chasm together? Were they not all burnt up, like paper as they were, in its molten eddies; and still the fire-sea raged fiercer than before? It is not by Mechanism, but by Religion; not by Self-interest, but by Loyalty, that men are governed or governable.

Remarkable it is, truly, how everywhere the eternal fact begins again to be recognised, that there is a Godlike in human affairs; that God not only made us and beholds us, but is in us and around us; that the Age of Miracles, as it ever was, now is. Such recognition we discern on all hands and in all countries: in each country after its own fashion. In France, among the younger nobler minds, strangely enough; where, in their loud contention with the Actual and Conscious, the Ideal or Unconscious is, for the time, without exponent;

where Religion means not the parent of Polity, as of all that is highest, but of Polity itself; and this and the other earnest man has not been wanting, who could audibly whisper to himself: "Go to, I will make a religion." In England still more strangely; as in all things, worthy England will have its way: by thy shrieking of hysterical women, casting out of devils, and other 'gifts of the Holy Ghost. Well might Jean Paul say, in this his twelfth hour of the Night, 'the living dream;' well might he say, 'the dead walk.' Meanwhile let us rejoice rather that so much has been seen into, were it through never so diffracting media, and never so madly distorted; that in all dialects, though but half-articulately, this high Gospel begins to be preached: Man is still Man. The genius of Mechanism, as was once before predicted, will not always sit like a choking incubus on our soul; but at length when by a new magic Word the old spell is broken, become our slave, and as familiar-spirit do all our bidding. 'We are near awakening when we dream that we dream.'

He that has an eye and a heart can even now say: Why should I falter? Light has come into the world; to such as love Light, so as Light must be loved, with a boundless all-doing, all-enduring love. For the rest, let that vain struggle to read the mystery of the Infinite cease to harass us. It is a mystery which, through all ages, we shall only read here a line of, there another line of. Do we not already know that the name of the Infinite is Good, is God? Here on Earth we are as Soldiers, fighting in a foreign land; that understand not the plan of the campaign, and have no need to understand it; seeing well what is at our hand to be done. Let us do it like Soldiers, with submission, with courage, with a heroic joy. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.' Behind us, behind each one of us, lie Six Thousand Years of human effort, human conquest: before us is the boundless Time, with its as yet uncreated and unconquered Continents and Eldorados, which we, even we, have to conquer, to create; and from the bosom of Eternity there shine for us celestial guiding stars.

'My inheritance how wide and fair!
Time is my fair seed-field, of Time I'm heir.'

GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.

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GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.

Goethe, a man well worth looking at. His kingly Head a very palace of Thought. A most royal work appointed to be done there. This Rag-Fair of a world all transfigured, and authentically revealed to be still holy, still divine. (p. 49).—Two great men sent among us: Bonaparte, like an all-devouring earthquake, hurling kingdom over kingdom; Goethe, the mild-shining, inaudible Light, making Chaos once more into a creation. The poorest Life no idle dream, but a solemn, earnest reality. (51).

GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.[1]

[1832.]

READER! thou here beholdest the Eidolon of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. So looks and lives, now in his eighty-third year, afar in the bright little friendly circle of Weimar, 'the clearest, most universal man of his time.' Strange enough is the cunning that resides in the ten fingers, especially what they bring to pass by pencil and pen! Him who never saw England, England now sees: from Fraser's 'Gallery' he looks forth here, wondering, doubtless, how *he* came into such a '*Lichtstrasse*, lightstreet,' or galaxy; yet with kind recognition of all neighbours, even as the moon looks kindly on lesser lights, and were they but fish-oil cressets, or terrestrial Vauxhall stars (of clipped tin), forbids not their shining.—Nay, the very soul of the man thou canst likewise behold. Do but look well in those forty volumes of 'musical wisdom,' which, under the title of *Goethe's Werke*, Cotta of Tübingen, or Black and Young of Covent Garden—once offer them a trifle of drink-money,—will cheerfully hand thee: greater sight, or more profitable, thou wilt not meet with in this generation. The German language, it is presumable thou knowest; if not, shouldst thou undertake the study thereof for that sole end, it were well worth thy while.

Croquis, a man otherwise of rather satirical turn, surprises us, on this occasion, with a fit of enthusiasm. He declares

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 26.—By Stieler of Munich: the copy in Fraser's Magazine proved a total failure and involuntary caricature,—resembling, as was said at the time, a wretched old-clothesman carrying behind his back a hat which he seemed to have stolen.

often, that here is the finest of all living heads ; speaks much of blended passion and repose ; serene depths of eyes ; the brow, the temples, royally arched, a very palace of thought ;—and so forth.

The Writer of these Notices is not without decision of character, and can believe what he knows. He answers Brother Croquis, that it is no wonder the head should be royal and a palace : for a most royal work was appointed to be done therein. Reader ! within that head the whole world lies mirrored, in such clear ethereal harmony as it has done in none since Shakspeare left us : even *this* rag-fair of a world, wherein thou painfully strugglest, and (as is like) stumblest,—all lies transfigured here, and revealed authentically to be still holy, still divine. What alchemy was that : to find a mad universe full of scepticism, discord, desperation ; and *transmute* it into a wise universe of belief, and melody, and reverence ! Was not *there* an *opus magnum*, if one ever was ? This, then, is he who, heroically doing and enduring, has accomplished it.

In this distracted Time of ours, wherein men have lost their old loadstars, and wandered after night-fires and foolish will-o'-wisps ; and all things, in that 'shaking of the nations,' have been tumbled into chaos, the high made low, and the low high ; and ever and anon some duke of this, and king of that, is gurgled aloft, to float there for moments ; and fancies himself the governor and head-director of it all, and *is* but the topmost froth-bell, to burst again and mingle with the wild fermenting mass : in this so despicable Time, we say, there were nevertheless (be the bounteous heavens ever thanked for it !) *two great men* sent among us. The one, in the island of St. Helena now sleeps 'dark and lone, amid the Ocean's everlasting lullaby :' the other still rejoices in the blessed sunlight, on the banks of the Ilme.

Great was the part allotted each, great the talent given him for the same ; yet, mark the contrast ! Bonaparte walked through the war-convulsed world like an all-devouring earthquake, heaving, thundering, hurling kingdom over kingdom ; Goethe was as the mild-shining, inaudible Light, which, notwithstanding, can again make that Chaos into a creation.

Thus, too, we see Napoleon, with his Austerlitzes, Waterloos and Borodinos, is quite gone ; all departed, sunk to silence like a tavern-brawl. While this other !—*he* still shines with his direct radiance ; his inspired words are to abide in living hearts, as the life and inspiration of thinkers, born and still unborn. Some fifty years hence, his thinking will be found translated, and ground down, even to the capacity of the diurnal press ; acts of parliament will be passed in virtue of him : —this man, if we will consider of it, is appointed to be ruler of the world.

Reader ! to thee thyself, even now, he has one council to give, the secret of his whole poetic alchemy : GEDENKE ZU LEBEN. Yes, 'think of living !' Thy life, wert thou the 'pitifullest of all the sons of earth,' is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own ; it is all thou hast to front eternity with. Work, then, even as he has done, and does—'LIKE A STAR, UNHASTING, YET UNRESTING.'—*Sic valeas.*

BIOGRAPHY.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.

BIOGRAPHY.

Biography, or human insight into human personality, the basis of all that can interest a human creature (p. 55).—Conversation, almost wholly biographic and autobiographic. Even in Art and highest Art, we can nowise forget the Artist; the biographic interest inevitably comprising its deepest and noblest meaning. History, in its best and truest form, the essence of innumerable Biographies. Modern 'Histories' of the Philosophic kind; and their dreary interminable vacuity. Fictitious Narratives, or mimic Biographies: The inspired Speaker, and the uninspired Babbler. The Foolishest of existing mortals. (56).—Sauerteig on the indispensability and significance of Reality. The old Mythologies were once Philosophies, and the old Epics *believed* Histories. Imagination but a poor affair when it has to part company with Understanding. Belief, the first condition of all spiritual Force whatsoever. Dreary modern Epics; and their uncredited, incredible Supernatural 'Machinery.' Even the *probable*, however skilfully wrought, is but the Shadow of some half-seen Reality. A whole epitome of the Infinite lies enfolded in the Life of every Man. Not the material, only the Seer and Poet wanting. Great is Invention, but that is but a poor sort with which Belief is not concerned: Its highest exercise, not to invent Fiction; but to invent or bring forth *new Truth*. Interest of the smallest historical *fact*, as contrasted with the grandest *fictitious* event: Momentary glimpse of an actual, living Peasant of the year 1651: The Past all holy to us: The poorest adventure of some poorest Outcast, after seventy years are come and gone, has meaning and unfathomable instruction for us. (66).—Secret for being graphic: An open loving Heart the beginning of all knowledge. Literary froth, and literary substance: The multitudinous men, women and children, that make up the army of British Authors. James Boswell: White of Selborne. One good Biography in England, *Boswell's Johnson*. (70).

BIOGRAPHY.[1]

[1832.]

Man's sociality of nature evinces itself, in spite of all that can be said, with abundant evidence by this one fact, were there no other: the unspeakable delight he takes in Biography. It is written, 'The proper study of mankind is man;' to which study, let us candidly admit, he, by true or by false methods, applies himself, nothing loth. 'Man is perennially interesting to man; nay, if we look strictly to it, there is nothing else interesting.' How inexpressibly comfortable to know our fellow-creature; to see into him, understand his goings-forth, decipher the whole heart of his mystery: nay, not only to see into him, but even to see out of him, to view the world altogether as he views it; so that we can theoretically construe him, and could almost practically personate him; and do now thoroughly discern both what manner of man he is, and what manner of thing he has got to work on and live on!

A scientific interest and a poetic one alike inspire us in this matter. A scientific: because every mortal has a Problem of Existence set before him, which, were it only, what for the most it is, the Problem of keeping soul and body together, must be to a certain extent *original*, unlike every other; and yet, at the same time, so *like* every other; like our own, therefore; instructive, moreover, since we also are indentured to

[1] Frazer's Magazine, No. 27 (for April).—The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.; including a Tour to the Hebrides: By James Boswell, Esq. —A new Edition, with numerous Additions and Notes: By John Wilson Croker, LL.D., F.R.S. 5 vols. London, 1831.

live. A poetic interest still more: for precisely this same struggle of human Freewill against material Necessity, which every man's Life, by the mere circumstance that the man continues alive, will more or less victoriously exhibit,—is that which above all else, or rather inclusive of all else, calls the Sympathy of mortal hearts into action; and whether as acted, or as represented and written of, not only is Poetry, but is the sole Poetry possible. Borne onwards by which two all-embracing interests, may the earnest Lover of Biography expand himself on all sides, and indefinitely enrich himself. Looking with the eyes of every new neighbour, he can discern a new world different for each: feeling with the heart of every neighbour, he lives with every neighbour's life, even as with his own. Of these millions of living men, each individual is a mirror to us; a mirror both scientific and poetic; or, if you will, both natural and magical;—from which one would so gladly draw aside the gauze veil; and, peering therein, discern the image of his own natural face and the supernatural secrets that prophetically lie under the same!

Observe, accordingly, to what extent, in the actual course of things, this business of Biography is practised and relished, Define to thyself, judicious Reader, the real significance of these phenomena, named Gossip, Egoism, Personal Narrative (miraculous or not), Scandal, Raillery, Slander, and such like; the sum-total of which (with some fractional addition of a better ingredient, generally too small to be noticeable) constitutes that other grand phenomenon still called 'Conversation.' Do they not mean wholly: *Biography* and *Autobiography?* Not only in the common speech of men; but in all Art too, which is or should be the concentrated and conserved essence of what men can speak and show, Biography is almost the one thing needful.

Even in the highest works of Art, our interest, as the critics complain, is too apt to be strongly or even mainly of a Biographic sort. In the Art, we can nowise forget the Artist: while looking on the *Transfiguration*, while studying the *Iliad*, we ever strive to figure to ourselves what spirit dwelt in Raphael; what a head was that of Homer, wherein, woven of

Elysian light and Tartarean gloom, that old world fashioned itself together, of which these written Greek characters are but a feeble though perennial copy. The Painter and the Singer are present to us; we partially and for the time become the very Painter and the very Singer, while we enjoy the Picture and the Song. Perhaps too, let the critic say what he will, this is the highest enjoyment, the clearest recognition, we can have of these. Art indeed is Art; yet Man also is Man. Had the *Transfiguration* been painted without human hand; had it grown merely on the canvas, say by atmospheric influences, as lichen-pictures do on rocks,—it were a grand Picture doubtless; yet nothing like so grand as *the* Picture, which, on opening our eyes, we everywhere in Heaven and in Earth see painted; and everywhere pass over with indifference,—because the Painter was not a Man. Think of this; much lies in it. The Vatican is great; yet poor to Chimborazo or the Peak of Teneriffe: its dome is but a foolish Big-endian or Little-endian chip of an egg-shell, compared with that star-fretted Dome where Arcturus and Orion glance forever; which latter, notwithstanding, who looks at, save perhaps some necessitous stargazer bent to make Almanacs; some thick-quilted watchman, to see what weather it will prove? The Biographic interest is wanting; no Michael Angelo was He who built that 'Temple of Immensity;' therefore do we, pitiful Littlenesses as we are, turn rather to wonder and to worship in the little toybox of a Temple built by our like.

Still more decisively, still more exclusively does the Biographic interest manifest itself, as we descend into lower regions of spiritual communication; through the whole range of what is called Literature. Of History, for example, the most honoured, if not honourable species of composition, is not the whole purport Biographic? 'History it has been said, 'is the essence of innumerable Biographies.' Such, at least, it should be: whether it is, might admit of question. But, in any case, what hope have we in turning over those old interminable Chronicles, with their garrulities and insipidities; or still worse, in patiently examining those modern

Narrations, of the Philosophic kind, where 'Philosophy, teaching by Experience,' has to sit like owl on housetop, *seeing* nothing, *understanding* nothing, uttering only, with solemnity enough, her perpetual most wearisome *hoo-hoo* :—what hope have we, except the for most part fallacious one of gaining some acquaintance with our fellow-creatures, though dead and vanished, yet dear to us; how they got along in those old days, suffering and doing; to what extent, and under what circumstances, they resisted the Devil and triumphed over him, or struck their colours to him, and were trodden under foot by him; how, in short, the perennial Battle went, which men name Life, which we also in these new days, with indifferent fortune, have to fight, and must bequeath to our sons and grandsons to go on fighting,—till the Enemy one day be quite vanquished and abolished, or else the great Night sink and part the combatants; and thus, either by some Millennium, or some new Noah's Deluge, the Volume of Universal History wind itself up! Other hope, in studying such Books, we have none: and that it is a deceitful hope, who that has tried knows not? A feast of widest Biographic insight is spread for us; we enter full of hungry anticipations: alas, like so many other feasts, which Life invites us to, a mere Ossian's 'feast of *shells*,'—the food and liquor being all emptied out and clean gone, and only the vacant dishes and deceitful emblems thereof left! Your Modern Historical Restaurateurs are indeed little better than high-priests of Famine; that keep choicest china dinner-sets, only no dinner to serve therein. Yet such is our Biographic appetite, we run trying from shop to shop, with ever new hope; and, unless we could eat the wind, with ever new disappointment.

Again, consider the whole class of Fictitious Narratives; from the highest category of epic or dramatic Poetry, in Shakspeare and Homer, down to the lowest of froth Prose, in the Fashionable Novel. What are all these but so many mimic Biographies? Attempts, here by an inspired Speaker, there by an uninspired Babbler, to deliver himself, more or less ineffectually, of the grand secret wherewith all hearts labour oppressed: The significance of Man's Life;—which

deliverance, even as traced in the unfurnished head, and printed at the Minerva Press, find readers. For, observe, though there is *a* greatest Fool, as a superlative in every kind; and *the* most Foolish man in the Earth is now indubitably living and breathing, and did this morning or lately eat breakfast, and is even now digesting the same; and looks out on the world, with his dim horn-eyes, and inwardly forms some unspeakable theory thereof: yet where shall the authentically Existing be personally met with! Can one of us, otherwise than by guess, know that we have got sight of him, have orally communed with him? To take even the narrower sphere of this our English Metropolis, can any one confidently say to himself, that he has conversed with the identical, individual Stupidest man now extant in London? No one. Deep as we dive in the Profound, there is ever a new depth opens: where the ultimate bottom may lie, through what new scenes of being we must pass before reaching it (except that we know it does lie somewhere, and might by human faculty and opportunity be reached,) is altogether a mystery to us. Strange, tantalising pursuit! We have the fullest assurance, not only that there is a Stupidest of London men actually resident, with bed and board of some kind, in London; but that several persons have been or perhaps are now speaking face to face with him: while for us, chase it as we may, such scientific blessedness will too probably be forever denied!— But the thing we meant to enforce was this comfortable fact, that no known Head was so wooden, but there might be other heads to which it were a genius and Friar Bacon's Oracle. Of no given Book, not even of a fashionable Novel, can you predicate with certainty that its vacuity is absolute; that there are not other vacuities which shall partially replenish themselves therefrom, and esteem it a *plenum*. How knowest thou, may the distressed Novelwright exclaim, that I, here where I sit, am the Foolishest of existing mortals; that this my Long-ear of a Fictitious Biography shall not find one and the other, into whose still longer ears it may be the means, under Providence, of instilling somewhat? We answer, None knows, none can certainly know: therefore, write on, worthy

Brother, even as thou canst, even as it has been given thee.

Here, however, in regard to 'Fictitious Biographies,' and much other matter of like sort, which the greener mind in these days inditeth, we may as well insert some singular sentences on the importance and significance of *Reality*, as they stand written for us in Professor Gottfried Sauerteig's *Æsthetische Springwürzel;* a Work, perhaps, as yet new to most English readers. The Professor and Doctor is not a man whom we can praise without reservation; neither shall we say that his *Springwürzel* (a sort of magical picklocks, as he affectedly names them, are adequate to '*start*' every *bolt* that locks up an æsthetic mystery: nevertheless, in his crabbed, one-sided way, he sometimes hits masses of the truth. We endeavour to translate faithfully, and trust the reader will find it worth serious perusal:

'The significance, even for poetic purposes,' says Sauerteig, 'that lies in REALITY is too apt to escape us; is perhaps only now beginning to be discerned. When we named *Rousseau's Confessions* an elegiaco-didactic Poem, we meant more than an empty figure of speech; we meant a historical scientific fact.

'Fiction, while the feigner of it knows that he is feigning, partakes, more than we suspect, of the nature of *lying;* and has ever an, in some degree, unsatisfactory character. All Mythologies were once Philosophies; were *believed;* the Epic Poems of old time, so long as they continued *epic*, and had any complete impressiveness, were Histories, and understood to be narratives of *facts*. In so far as Homer employed his gods as mere ornamental fringes, and had not himself, or at least did not expect his hearers to have, a belief that they were real agents in those antique doings; so far did he fail to be *genuine;* so far was he a partially *hollow* and false singer; and sang to please only a portion of man's mind, not the whole thereof.

'Imagination is, after all, but a poor matter when it has to part company with Understanding, and even front it hostilely in flat contradiction. Our mind is divided in twain: there is

contest; wherein that which is weaker must needs come to the worse. Now of all feelings, states, principles, call it what you will, in man's mind, is not Belief the clearest, strongest; against which all others contend in vain? Belief is, indeed, the beginning and first condition of all spiritual Force whatsoever: only in so far as Imagination, were it but momentarily, is *believed*, can there be any use or meaning in it, any enjoyment of it. And what is momentary Belief? The enjoyment of a moment. Whereas a perennial Belief were enjoyment perennially, and with the whole united soul.

'It is thus that I judge of the Supernatural in an Epic Poem; and would say, the instant it has ceased to be authentically supernatural, and become what you call "Machinery:" 'Sweep it out of sight (*schaff' es mir vom Halse*)! Of a truth, that same "Machinery," about which the critics make such hubbub, was well named *Machinery;* for it is in very deed mechanical, nowise inspired or poetical. Neither for us is there the smallest æsthetic enjoyment in it; save only in this way; that we believe it *to have been believed*,—by the Singer or his Hearers; into whose case we now laboriously struggle to transport ourselves; and so with stinted enough result, catch some reflex of the Reality which for them was wholly real, and visible face to face. Whenever it has come so far that your "Machinery" is avowedly mechanical and unbelieved,—what is it else, if we dare tell ourselves the truth, but a miserable, meaningless Deception, kept up by old use and wont alone? If the gods of an *Iliad* are to us no longer authentic Shapes of Terror, heart-stirring, heart-appalling, but only vague, glittering Shadows,—what must the dead Pagan gods of an *Epigoniad* be, the dead-living Pagan-Christian gods of a *Lusiad*, the concrete-abstract, evangelical-metaphysical gods of a *Paradise Lost?* Superannuated lumber! Cast raiment, at best; in which some poor mime, strutting and swaggering, may or may not set forth new noble Human Feelings (again a Reality), and so secure, or not secure, our pardon of such hoydenish masking; for which, in any case, he has a pardon to *ask*.

'True enough, none but the earliest Epic Poems can claim

this distinction of entire credibility, of Reality: after an *Iliad*, a *Shaster*, a *Koran*, and other the like primitive performances, the rest seem, by this rule of mine, to be altogether excluded from the list. Accordingly, what *are* all the rest, from Virgil's *Æneid* downwards, in comparison? Frosty, artificial, heterogeneous things: more of gumflowers than of roses; at the best, of the two mixed incoherently together: to some of which, indeed, it were hard to deny the title of Poems; yet to no one of which can that title belong in any sense even resembling the old high one it, in those old days, conveyed,—when the epithet "divine" or "sacred," as applied to the uttered Word of man, was not a vain metaphor, a vain sound, but a real name with meaning. Thus, too, the farther we recede from those early days, when Poetry, as true Poetry is always, was still sacred or divine, and inspired (what ours, in great part, only pretends to be),—the more impossible becomes it to produce any, we say not true Poetry, but tolerable semblance of such; the hollower, in particular, grow all manner of Epics; till at length, as in this generation, the very name of Epic sets men a-yawning, the announcement of a new Epic is received as a public calamity.

'But what if the *impossible* being once for all quite discarded, the *probable* be well adhered to: how stands it with fiction *then?* Why, then, I would say, the evil is much mended, but nowise completely cured. We have then, in place of the wholly dead modern Epic, the partially living modern Novel; to which latter it is much easier to lend that above-mentioned, so essential "momentary credence" than to the former: indeed, infinitely easier; for the former being flatly incredible, no mortal *can* for a moment credit it, for a moment enjoy it. Thus, here and there, a *Tom Jones*, a *Meister*, a *Crusoe*, will yield no little solacement to the minds of men; though still immeasurably less than a *Reality* would, were the significance thereof as impressively unfolded, were the genius that could so unfold it once given us by the kind Heavens. Neither say thou that proper Realities are wanting: for Man's Life, now, as of old, is the genuine work of God; wherever there is a Man, a God also is revealed, and all that is Godlike: a whole

epitome of the Infinite, with its meanings, lies enfolded in the Life of every Man. Only, alas, that the Seer to discern this same Godlike, and with fit utterance *un*fold it for us, is wanting, and may long be wanting!

'Nay, a question arises on us here, wherein the whole German reading-world will eagerly join: Whether man *can* any longer be so interested by the spoken Word, as he often was in those primeval days, when rapt away by its inscrutable power, he pronounced it, in such dialect as he had, to be *transcendental* (to *transcend* all measure), to be sacred, prophetic, and the inspiration of a god? For myself, I (*ich meines Ortes*), by faith or by insight, do heartily understand that the answer to such question will be, Yea! For never that I could in searching find out, has Man been, by Time which devours so much, deprivated of any faculty whatsoever that he in any era was possessed of. To my seeming, the babe born yesterday has all the organs of Body, Soul, and Spirit, and in exactly the same combination and entireness, that the oldest Pelasgic Greek, or Mesopotamian Patriarch, or Father Adam himself could boast of. Ten fingers, one heart with venous and arterial blood therein, still belong to man that is born of woman: when did he lose any of his spiritual Endowments either; above all, his highest spiritual Endowment, that of revealing Poetic Beauty, and of adequately receiving the same? Not the material, not the susceptibility is wanting; only the Poet, or long series of Poets, to work on these. True, alas too true, the Poet *is* still utterly wanting, or all but utterly: nevertheless have we not centuries enough before us to produce him in? Him and much else!—I, for the present, will but predict that chiefly by working more and more on REALITY, and evolving more and more wisely *its* inexhaustible meanings; and, in brief, speaking forth in fit utterance whatsoever our whole soul *believes*, and ceasing to speak forth what thing soever our whole soul does not believe,—will this high emprise be accomplished, or approximated to.'

These notable, and not unfounded, though partial and *deep*-seeing rather than *wide*-seeing observations on the great import of REALITY, considered even as a poetic material, we

have inserted the more willingly, because a transient feeling to the same purpose may often have suggested itself to many readers; and, on the whole, it is good that every reader and every writer understand, with all intensity of conviction, what quite infinite worth lies in *Truth:* how all-pervading, omnipotent, in man's mind, is the thing we name *Belief*. For the rest, Herr Sauerteig, though one-sided, on this matter of Reality, seems heartily persuaded, and is not perhaps so ignorant as he looks. It cannot be unknown to him, for example, what noise is made about 'Invention;' what a supreme rank this faculty is reckoned to hold in the poetic endowment. Great truly is Invention; nevertheless, that is but a poor exercise of it with which Belief is not concerned. 'An Irishman with whisky in his head,' as poor Byron said, will invent you, in this kind, till there is enough and to spare. Nay, perhaps, if we consider well, the highest exercise of Invention has, in very deed, nothing to do with Fiction; but is an invention of new Truth, what we can call a Revelation; which last does undoubtedly transcend all other poetic efforts, nor can Herr Sauerteig be too loud in its praises. But, on the other hand, whether such effort is still possible for man, Herr Sauerteig and the bulk of the world are probably at issue;—and will probably continue so till that same 'Revelation,' or new 'Invention of Reality,' of the sort he desiderates, shall itself make its appearance.

Meanwhile, quitting these airy regions, let any one bethink him how impressive the smallest historical *fact* may become, as contrasted with the grandest *fictitious event;* what an incalculable force lies for us in this consideration: The Thing which I here hold imaged in my mind did actually occur; was, in very truth, an element in the system of the All, whereof I too form part; had therefore, and has, through all time, an authentic being; is not a dream, but a reality! We ourselves can remember reading, in *Lord Clarendon*,[1] with feelings perhaps somehow accidentally opened to it,—certainly with a depth of impression strange to us then and now

[1] History of the Rebellion, iii. 625.

—that insignificant-looking passage, where Charles, after the battle of Worcester, glides down, with Squire Careless, from the Royal Oak, at nightfall, being hungry: how, 'making a shift to get over hedges and ditches, after walking at least eight or nine miles, which were the more grievous to the King by the weight of his boots (for he could not put *them* off when he cut off his hair, for want of shoes), before morning they came to *a poor cottage, the owner whereof being a Roman Catholic was known to Careless.*' How this poor drudge, being knocked up from his snoring, 'carried them into a little barn full of hay, which was a better lodging than he had for himself;' and by and by, not without difficulty, brought his Majesty 'a piece of bread and a great pot of buttermilk,' saying candidly that "he himself lived by his daily labour, and that what he had brought him was the fare he and his wife had:" on which nourishing diet his Majesty, 'staying upon the haymow,' feeds thankfully for two days; and then departs, under new guidance, having first changed clothes, down to the very shirt and 'old pair of shoes,' with his landlord; and so, as worthy Bunyan has it, 'goes on his way, and sees him no more.' Singular enough, if we will think of it! This then was a genuine flesh-and-blood Rustic of the year 1651: he did actually swallow bread and buttermilk (not having ale and bacon), and do field-labour: with these hobnailed 'shoes' has sprawled through mud-roads in winter, and, jocund or not, driven his team a-field in summer: he made bargains; had chafferings and higglings, now a sore heart, now a glad one; was born; was a son, was a father; toiled in many ways, being forced to it it, till the strength was all worn out of him: and then—lay down 'to rest his galled back,' and sleep there till the long-distant morning!—How comes it, that he alone of all the British rustics who tilled and lived along with him, on whom the blessed sun on that same 'fifth day of September' was shining, should have chanced to rise on us; that this poor pair of clouted Shoes, out of the million million hides that have been tanned, and cut, and worn, should still subsist, and hang visibly together? We see him but for a moment; for one moment, the blanket of the Night

is rent asunder, so that we behold and see, and then closes over him—forever.

So too, in some *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, how indelible, and magically bright, does many a little *Reality* dwell in our remembrance! There is no need that the personages on the scene be a King and Clown; that the scene be the Forest of the Royal Oak, 'on the borders of Staffordshire:' need only that the scene lie on this old firm Earth of ours, where we also have so surprisingly arrived; that the personages be *men*, and *seen* with the eyes of a man. Foolish enough, how some slight, perhaps mean and even ugly incident, if *real* and well presented, will fix itself in a susceptive memory, and lie ennobled there; silvered over with the pale cast of thought, with the pathos which belongs only to the Dead. For the Past is all holy to us; the Dead are all holy, even they that were base and wicked while alive. Their baseness and wickedness was not *They*, was but the heavy and unmanageable Environment that lay round them, with which they fought unprevailing: *they* (the ethereal god-given Force that dwelt in them, and was their *Self*) have now shuffled-off that heavy Environment, and are free and pure: their life-long Battle, go how it might, is all ended, with many wounds or with fewer; they have been recalled from it, and the once harsh-jarring battle-field has become a silent awe-inspiring Golgotha, and *Gottesacker* (Field of God)!—Boswell relates this in itself smallest and poorest of occurrences: 'As we walked along the Strand to-night, arm in arm, a woman of the town accosted us in the usual enticing manner. "No, no, my girl," said Johnson; "it won't do." He, however, did not treat her with harshness; 'and we talked of the wretched life of such women.' Strange power of *Reality!* Not even this poorest of occurrences, but now, after seventy years are come and gone, has a meaning for us. Do but consider that it is *true;* that it did in very deed occur! That unhappy Outcast, with all her sins and woes, her lawless desires, too complex mischances, her wailings and her riotings, has departed utterly; alas! her siren finery has got all besmutched, ground, generations since, into dust and smoke; of her degraded body, and

whole miserable earthly existence, all is away: *she* is no longer here, but far from us, in the bosom of Eternity,—whence we too came, whither we too are bound! Johnson said, "No, no, my girl; it won't do;" and then 'we talked;' —and herewith the wretched one, seen but for the twinkling of an eye, passes on into the utter Darkness. No high Calista, that ever issued from Story-teller's brain, will impress us more deeply than this meanest of the mean; and for a good reason: That *she* issued from the Maker of Men.

It is well worth the Artist's while to examine for himself what it is that gives such pitiful incidents their memorableness; his aim likewise is, above all things, to be *memorable*. Half the effect, we already perceive, depends on the object; on its being *real*, on its being really *seen*. The other half will depend on the observer; and the question now is: How are real objects to be *so* seen; on what quality of observing or of style in describing, does this so intense pictorial power depend? Often a slight circumstance contributes curiously to the result: some little, and perhaps to appearance accidental, feature is presented; a light-gleam, which instantaneously *excites* the mind, and urges it to complete the picture, and evolve the meaning thereof for itself. By critics, such light-gleams and their almost magical influence have frequently been noted: but the power to produce such, to select such features as will produce them, is generally treated as a knack, or trick of the trade, a secret for being 'graphic;' whereas these magical feats are, in truth, rather inspirations; and the gift of performing them, which acts unconsciously, without forethought, and as if by nature alone, is properly a *genius* for description.

One grand, invaluable secret there is, however, which includes all the rest, and, what is comfortable, lies clearly in every man's power: *To have an open loving heart, and what follows from the possession of such!* Truly it has been said, emphatically in these days ought it to be repeated: A loving Heart is the beginning of all Knowledge. This it is that opens the whole mind, quickens every faculty of the intellect to do its fit work, that of *knowing;* and therefrom, by sure

consequence, of *vividly uttering-forth.* Other secret for being 'graphic' is there none, worth having: but this is an all-sufficient one. See, for example, what a small Boswell can do! Hereby, indeed, is the whole man made a living mirror, wherein the wonders of this ever-wonderful Universe are, in their true light (which is ever a magical, miraculous one) represented, and reflected back on us. It has been said, "the heart sees farther than the head:' but, indeed, without the seeing heart, there is no true seeing for the head so much as possible; all is mere *oversight,* hallucination and vain superficial phantasmagoria, which can permanently profit no one.

Here, too, may we not pause for an instant, and make a practical reflection? Considering the multitude of mortals that handle the Pen in these days, and can mostly spell, and write without glaring violations of grammar, the question naturally arises: How is it, then, that no Work proceeds from them, bearing any stamp of authenticity and permanence; of worth for more than one day? Ship-loads of Fashionable Novels, Sentimental Rhymes, Tragedies, Farces, Diaries of Travel, Tales by flood and field, are swallowed monthly into the bottomless Pool: still does the Press toil; innumerable Paper-makers, Compositors, Printers' Devils, Bookbinders, and Hawkers grown hoarse with loud proclaiming, rest not from their labour; and still, in torrents, rushes on the great array of Publications, unpausing, to their final home; and still Oblivion, like the Grave, cries, Give! Give! How is it that of all these countless multitudes, no one can attain to the smallest mark of excellence, or produce aught that shall endure longer than 'snow-flake on the river,' or the foam of penny-beer? We answer: Because they *are* foam; because there is no *Reality* in them. These Three Thousand men, women and children, that make up the army of British Authors, do not, if we will well consider it, *see* anything whatever; consequently *have* nothing that they can record and utter, only more or fewer things that they can plausibly pretend to record. The Universe, of Man and Nature, is still quite shut-up from them; the 'open secret' still utterly a secret; because no sympathy with Man or Nature, no love

and free simplicity of heart has yet unfolded the same. Nothing but a pitiful Image of their own pitiful Self with its vanities, and grudgings, and ravenous hunger of all kinds, hangs forever painted in the retina of these unfortunate persons; so that the starry ALL, with whatsoever it embraces, does but appear as some expanded magic-lantern shadow of that same Image,—and naturally looks pitiful enough.

It is vain for these persons to allege that they are naturally without gift, naturally stupid and sightless, and so *can* attain to no knowledge of anything; therefore, in writing of anything, must needs write falsehoods of it, there being in it no truth for them. Not so, good Friends. The stupidest of you has a certain faculty; were it but that of articulate speech (say, in the Scottish, the Irish, the Cockney dialect, or even in 'Governess-English'), and of physically discerning what lies under your nose. The stupidest of you would perhaps grudge to be compared in faculty with James Boswell; yet see what he has produced! You do not use your faculty honestly; your heart is shut up; full of greediness, malice, discontent; so your intellectual sense cannot be open. It is vain also to urge that James Boswell had opportunities; saw great men and great things, such as you can never hope to look on. What make ye of Parson White in Selborne? He had not only no great men to look on, but not even men; merely sparrows and cock-chafers: yet has he left us a *Biography* of these; which, under its title *Natural History of Selborne*, still remains valuable to us; which has copied a little sentence or two *faithfully* from the Inspired Volume of Nature, and so is itself not without inspiration. Go ye and do likewise. Sweep away utterly all frothiness and falsehood from your heart; struggle unweariedly to acquire, what is possible for every god-created Man, a free, open, humble soul: *speak not at all, in any wise, till you have somewhat to speak;* care not for the *reward* of your speaking, but simply and with undivided mind for the *truth* of your speaking: then be placed in what section of Space and of Time soever, do but open your eyes, and they shall actually *see*, and bring you real *knowledge*, wondrous, worthy of *belief;* and instead of one Boswell and one White,

the world will rejoice in a thousand,—stationed on their thousand several watch-towers, to instruct us by indubitable documents, of whatsoever in our so stupendous World comes to light and *is!* O, had the Editor of this Magazine but a magic rod to turn all that not inconsiderable Intellect, which now deluges us with artificial fictitious soap-lather, and mere Lying, into the faithful study of Reality,—what knowledge of great, everlasting Nature, and of Man's ways and doings therein, would not every year bring us in! Can we but change one single soap-latherer and mountebank Juggler, into a true Thinker and Doer, who even *tries* honestly to think and do,—great will be our reward.

But to return; or rather from this point to begin our journey! If now, what with Herr Sauerteig's *Springwürzel*, what with so much lucubration of our own, it have become apparent how deep, immeasurable is the 'worth that lies in *Reality*,' and farther, how exclusive the interest which man takes in Histories of Man,—may it not seem lamentable, that so few genuinely good *Biographies* have yet been accumulated in Literature; that in the whole world, one cannot find, going strictly to work, above some dozen, or baker's dozen, and those chiefly of very ancient date? Lamentable; yet, after what we have just seen, accountable. Another question might be asked: How comes it that in England we have simply one good Biography, this *Boswell's Johnson;* and of good, indifferent, or even bad attempts at Biography, fewer than any civilised people? Consider the French and Germans, with their Moreris, Bayles, Jördenses, Jöchers, their innumerable *Mémoires*, and *Schilderungen*, and *Biographies Universelles;* not to speak of Rousseaus, Goethes, Schuberts, Jung-Stillings: and then contrast with these our poor Birches and Kippises and Pecks; the whole breed of whom moreover, is now extinct!

With this question, as the answer might lead us far, and come out unflattering to patriotic sentiment, we shall not intermeddle; but turn rather, with great pleasure, to the fact, that one excellent Biography *is* actually English;—and even now lies, in Five new Volumes, at our hand, soliciting a new

consideration from us ; such as, age after age (the Perennial showing ever new phases as *our* position alters), it may long be profitable to bestow on it ;—to which task we here, in this position, in this age, gladly address ourselves.

First, however, let the foolish April-fool day pass by ; and our Reader, during these twenty-nine days of uncertain weather that will follow, keep pondering, according to convenience, the purport of BIOGRAPHY in general : then, with the blessed dew of May-day, and in unlimited convenience of space, shall all that we have written on *Johnson* and *Boswell's Johnson* and *Croker's Boswell's Johnson* be faithfully laid before him.

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.

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BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.

Mr. Croker's editorial peculiarities and deficiencies. (p. 77).—Boswell, a man whose bad qualities lay open to the general eye: What great and genuine good was in him, nowise so self-evident. His true *Hero-worship* for poor rusty-coated, rough old Samuel Johnson. His uncouth symbolic relation to his decrepit, death-sick Era. That loose-flowing, careless looking Work of his, a picture by one of Nature's own Artists. His grand intellectual talent an *unconscious* one, of far higher reach and significance than Logic. Poor Bozzy an ill-assorted, glaring mixture of the highest and the lowest. Johnson's own Writings stand on a quite inferior level to this *Johnsoniad* of Boswell: It shows us objects that in very deed existed; it is all *true*. (81).—What a pathetic, sacred, in every sense poetic meaning is implied in that one word, *Past!* This Book of Boswell's will give us more real insight into the History of England during those days, than any book taking upon itself that special aim. Robertson's 'History of Scotland.' How 'Histories' are written. Boswell's conversational jottings, no infringement of social privacy. Man properly an *incarnated* Word: Out of Silence comes strength. Thinkest thou that because no Boswell is there to note thy jargon, it therefore dies and is harmless? (99).—Our interest in Biography considerably modified by the dull servile imitancy of mankind. Significant resemblances of Men and Sheep. Mystic power of Imitancy and Association. Amid the dull millions are scattered here and there leading, original natures; with eye to *see*, and will to *do*. Such Men properly the synopsis and epitome of the age in which they live; whose Biographies are above all things worth having. Of such chosen men, although of their humbler ranks, was Samuel Johnson; his existence no idle Dream, but a Reality which he transacted *awake*. As the highest Gospel was a Biography, so is the Life of every good man still an indubitable Gospel. (100).—The Contradiction of Inward and Outward, which yawns wide enough in every Life, in Johnson's wider than in most. His calling by nature, rather towards Active than Speculative life; as a Doer of Work, he had shone even more than as Speaker of the Word. His disposition for *royalty* in his early boyhood. College life: proud as the proudest poor as the poorest: 'Mistaken' estimate of Christian Scholarship. Ushership at Market Bosworth: Bread and water of affliction, so bitter that he could not swallow them. Tries Literature. His kind, true, brave-hearted Wife. Young gentlemen boarded and taught. Privations and trials of Authorship: Its transition period, from the protection of Patrons to that of the Public. Johnson the first Au-

thor of any significance, who faithfully lived by the day's work of his craft: His sturdy rebellion against the Chesterfield 'encumbrances.' (104).—Johnson's Era wholly divided against itself. How was a noble man, resolute for the Truth, to act in it? Glory to our brave Samuel, who once more gave the world assurance of a Man! Wrong, not only different from Right, but infinitely different: Johnson's Religion as the light of life to him. His rugged literary labours: His insignificant-looking 'Parliamentary Debates,' the origin of our stupendous Fourth Estate. So poor is he, his Wife must leave him, and seek shelter among other relations: Could not remember the day he had passed free from pain: Manfully makes the best of his hard lot. The fantastic article called 'Fame,' of little other than a poor market value. Thy Fame! Unhappy mortal, where will it and thou be in some fifty years? (116).—Gradually a little circle gathers round the Wise man. In his fifty-third year, he is beneficed by royal bounty. Real Primate of all England. The *last* of many things, Johnson was the last genuine English Tory. The highest Courage not the Courage to die decently, but to live manfully. Johnson's talent of silence: Where there is nothing farther to be *done*, there shall nothing more be *said*. His thorough Truthfulness, and clear hatred of every form of Cant. Few men have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature than rough old Samuel. Catherine Chambers's death-bed: The market-place at Uttoxeter. Johnson's Politeness: His Prejudices: His culture and sympathies wholly English. Samuel Johnson and David Hume, embodiments of the two grand spiritual Antagonisms of their time: Whoso should combine the intrepid Candour, and decisive scientific Clearness of the one, with the Reverence, Love and devout Humility of the other, were the whole man of a new time. (129).

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.[1]

[1832.]

Æsop's Fly, sitting on the axle of the chariot, has been much laughed at for exclaiming: What a dust I do raise! Yet which of us, in his way, has not sometimes been guilty of the like? Nay, so foolish are men, they often, standing at ease and as spectators on the highway, will volunteer to exclaim of the Fly (not being tempted to it, as *he* was) exactly to the same purport: What a dust *thou* dost raise! Smallest of mortals, when mounted aloft by circumstances, come to seem great; smallest of phenomena connected with them are treated as important, and must be sedulously scanned, and commented upon with loud emphasis.

That Mr. Croker should undertake to edit *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, was a praiseworthy but no miraculous procedure: neither could the accomplishment of such undertaking be, in an epoch like ours, anywise regarded as an event in Universal History; the right or the wrong accomplishment thereof was, in very truth, one of the most insignificant of things. However, it sat in a great environment, on the axle of a high, fast-rolling, parliamentary chariot; and all the world has exclaimed over it, and the author of it: What a dust thou dost raise! List to the Reviews, and 'Organs of Public Opinion,' from the *National Omnibus* upwards: criticisms vituperative and laudatory, stream from their thousand throats of brass

[1] Fraser's Magazine, No. 28.—The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. including a Tour to the Hebrides: By James Boswell, Esq.—A new Edition, with numerous Additions and Notes: by John Wilson Croker, LL.D., F.R.S. 5 vols. London, 1831.

and of leather; here chaunting *Io-pæans;* there grating harsh thunder, or vehement shrewmouse squeaklets; till the general ear is filled, and nigh deafened. Boswell's Book had a noiseless birth, compared with this Edition of Boswell's Book. On the other hand, consider with what degree of tumult *Paradise Lost* and the *Iliad* were ushered in!

To swell such clamour, or prolong it beyond the time, seems nowise our vocation here. At most, perhaps, we are bound to inform simple readers, with all possible brevity, what manner of performance and Edition this is; especially, whether, in our poor judgment, it is worth laying out three pounds sterling upon, yea or not. The whole business belongs distinctly to the lower ranks of the trivial class.

Let us admit, then, with great readiness, that as Johnson once said, and the Editor repeats, 'all works which describe manners require notes in sixty or seventy years, or less;' that, accordingly, a new Edition of Boswell was desirable; and that Mr. Croker has given one. For this task he had various qualifications: his own voluntary resolution to do it; his high place in society, unlocking all manner of archives to him; not less, perhaps, a certain anecdotico-biographic turn of mind, natural or acquired; we mean, a love for the *minuter* events of History, and talent for investigating these. Let us admit too, that he has been very diligent; seems to have made inquiries perseveringly far and near; as well as drawn freely from his own ample stores; and so tells us, to appearance quite accurately, much that he has not found lying on the highways, but has had to seek and dig for. Numerous persons, chiefly of quality, rise to view in these Notes; when and also where they came into this world, received office or promotion, died and were buried (only what they *did*, except digest, remaining often too mysterious),—is faithfully enough set down. Whereby all that their various and doubtless widely-scattered Tombstones could have taught us, is here presented, at once, in a bound Book. Thus is an indubitable conquest, though a small one, gained over our great enemy, the all-destroyer Time; and as such shall have welcome.

Nay, let us say that the spirit of Diligence, exhibited in this

department, seems to attend the Editor honestly throughout: he keeps everywhere a watchful outlook on his Text; reconciling the distant with the present, or at least indicating and regretting their irreconcilability; elucidating, smoothing down; in all ways exercising, according to ability, a strict editorial superintendence. Any little Latin or even Greek phrase is rendered into English, in general with perfect accuracy; citations are verified, or else corrected. On all hands, moreover, there is a certain spirit of Decency maintained and insisted on: if not good morals, yet good manners, are rigidly inculcated; if not Religion, and a devout Christian heart, yet Orthodoxy, and a cleanly, Shovel-hatted look,—which, as compared with flat Nothing, is something very considerable. Grant too, as no contemptible triumph of this latter spirit, that though the Editor is known as a decided Politician and Party-man, he has carefully subdued all temptations to transgress in that way: except by quite involuntary indications, and rather as it were the pervading temper of the whole, you could not discover on which side of the Political Warfare he is enlisted and fights. This, as we said, is a great triumph of the Decency-principle: for this, and for these other graces and performances, let the Editor have all praise.

Herewith, however, must the praise unfortunately terminate. Diligence, Fidelity, Decency, are good and indispensable: yet, without Faculty, without Light, they will not do the work. Along with that Tombstone-information, perhaps even without much of it, we could have liked to gain some answer, in one way or other, to this wide question: What and how was *English Life* in Johnson's time; wherein has ours grown to differ therefrom? In other words: What things have we to forget, what to fancy and remember, before we, from such distance, can put ourselves in Johnson's *place;* and so, in the full sense of the term, *understand* him, his sayings and his doings? This was indeed specially the problem which a Commentator and Editor had to solve: a complete solution of it should have lain in him, his whole mind should have been filled and prepared with perfect insight into it; then, whether in the way of express Dissertation, of incidental

Exposition and Indication, opportunities enough would have occurred of bringing out the same: what was dark in the figure of the Past had thereby been enlightened; Boswell had, not in show and word only, but in very fact, been made *new* again, readable to us who are divided from him, even as he was to those close at hand. Of all which very little has been attempted here; accomplished, we should say, next to nothing, or altogether nothing.

Excuse, no doubt, is in readiness for such omission; and, indeed, for innumerable other failings;—as where, for example, the Editor will punctually explain what is already sunclear; and then anon, not without frankness, declare frequently enough that 'the Editor does not understand,' that 'the Editor cannot guess,'—while, for most part, the Reader cannot help both guessing and seeing. Thus, if Johnson say, in one sentence, that 'English names should not be used in Latin verses;' and then, in the next sentence, speak blamingly of 'Carteret being used as a dactyl,' will the generality of mortals detect any puzzle there? Or again, where poor Boswell writes: 'I always remember a remark made to me by a Turkish lady, educated in France: "*Ma foi, monsieur notre bonheur dépend de la façon que notre sang circule;*"—though the Turkish lady here speaks English-French, where is the call for a Note like this: 'Mr. Boswell no doubt fancied these words had some meaning, or he would hardly have quoted them: but what that meaning is, the Editor cannot guess'? The Editor is clearly no witch at a riddle.—For these and all kindred deficiencies the excuse, as we said, is at hand; but the fact of their existence is not the less certain and regrettable.

Indeed it, from a very early stage of the business, becomes afflictively apparent, how much the Editor, so well furnished with all external appliances and means, is from within unfurnished with means for forming to himself any just notion of Johnson, or of Johnson's Life; and therefore of speaking on that subject with much hope of edifying. Too lightly is it from the first taken for granted that *Hunger*, the great basis of our life, is also its apex and ultimate perfection; that as 'Neediness and Greediness and Vainglory' are the chief quali-

ties of most men, so no man, not even a Johnson, acts or can think of acting on any other principle. Whatsoever, therefore, cannot be referred to the two former categories (Need and Greed), is without scruple ranged under the latter. It is here properly that our Editor becomes burdensome ; and, to the weaker sort, even a nuisance. "What good is it," will such cry, "when we had still some faint shadow of belief that man was better than a selfish Digesting-machine, what good is it to poke in, at every turn, and explain how this and that which we thought noble in old Samuel, was vulgar, base ; that for him too there was no reality but in the Stomach; and except Pudding, and the finer species of pudding which is named Praise, life had no pabulum? Why, for instance, when we know that Johnson *loved* his good Wife, and says expressly that their marriage was 'a love-match on both sides,' —should two closed lips open to tell us only this: 'Is it not possible that the obvious advantage of having a woman of experience to superintend an establishment of this kind (the Edial School) may have contributed to a match so disproportionate in point of age?—ED.' Or again when, in the Text, the honest cynic speaks freely of his former poverty, and it is known that he once lived on fourpence-halfpenny a-day,— need a Commentator advance, and comment thus : 'When we find Dr. Johnson tell unpleasant truths to, or of, other men, let us recollect that he does not appear to have spared himself, on occasions in which he might be forgiven for doing so'? Why in short," continues the exasperated Reader, "should Notes of this species stand affronting me, when there might have been no Note at all?"—Gentle Reader, we answer, Be not wroth. What other could an honest Commentator do, than give thee the best he had? Such was the picture and theorem he had fashioned for himself of the world and of man's doings therein : take it, and draw wise inferences from it. If there did exist a Leader of Public Opinion, and Champion of Orthodoxy in the Church of Jesus of Nazareth, who reckoned that man's glory consisted in not being poor ; and that a Sage, and Prophet of his time, must needs blush because the world had paid him at that easy rate of fourpence-

halfpenny *per diem*,—was not the fact of such existence worth knowing, worth considering?

Of a much milder hue, yet to us practically of an all-defacing, and for the present enterprise quite ruinous character,—is another grand fundamental failing; the last we shall feel ourselves obliged to take the pain of specifying here. It is, that our Editor has fatally, and almost surprisingly, mistaken the limits of an Editor's function; and so, instead of working on the margin with his Pen, to elucidate as best might be, strikes boldly into the body of the page with his Scissors, and there clips at discretion! Four Books Mr. C. had by him, wherefrom to gather light for the fifth, which was Boswell's. What does he do but now, in the placidest manner,—slit the whole five into slips, and sew these together into a *sextum quid*, exactly at his own convenience; giving Boswell the credit of the whole! By what art-magic, our readers ask, has he united them? By the simplest of all: by Brackets. Never before was the full virtue of the Bracket made manifest. You begin a sentence under Boswell's guidance, thinking to be carried happily through it by the same: but no; in the middle, perhaps after your semicolon, and some consequent 'for,'—starts up one of these Bracket-ligatures, and stitches you in from half a page, to twenty or thirty pages of a Hawkins, Tyers, Murphy, Piozzi; so that often one must make the old sad reflection, Where we are, we know; whither we are going, no man knoweth! It is truly said also, There is much between the cup and the lip; but here the case is still sadder: for not till after consideration can you ascertain, now when the cup is *at* the lip, what liquor it is you are imbibing; whether Boswell's French wine which you began with, or some Piozzi's ginger-beer, or Hawkins's entire, or perhaps some other great Brewer's penny-swipes or even alegar, which has been surreptitiously substituted instead thereof. A situation almost original; not to be tried a second time! But, in fine, what ideas Mr. Croker entertains of a literary *whole* and the thing called *Book*, and how the very Printer's Devils did not rise in mutiny against such conglomeration as this, and refuse to print it,—may remain a problem.

But now happily our say is said. All faults, the Moralists tell us, are properly *shortcomings* ; crimes themselves are nothing other than a *not doing enough* ; a *fighting*, but with defective vigour. How much more a mere insufficiency, and this after good efforts, in handicraft practice ! Mr. Croker says : 'The worst that can happen is that all the present Editor has contributed may, if the reader so pleases, be rejected as *surplusage*.' It is our pleasant duty to take with hearty welcome what he has given ; and render thanks even for what he meant to give. Next and finally, it is our painful duty to declare, aloud if that be necessary, that his gift, as weighed against the hard money which the Booksellers demand for giving it you, is (in our judgment) very greatly the lighter. No portion, accordingly, of our small floating capital has been embarked in the business, or shall ever be ; indeed, were we in the market for such a thing, there is simply *no* Edition of *Boswell* to which this last would seem preferable. And now enough, and more than enough !

We have next a word to say of James Boswell. Boswell has already been much commented upon ; but rather in the way of censure and vituperation, than of true recognition. He was a man that brought himself much before the world : confessed that he eagerly coveted fame, or if that were not possible, notoriety ; of which latter as he gained far more than seemed his due, the public were incited, not only by their natural love of scandal, but by a special ground of envy, to say whatever ill of him could be said. Out of the fifteen millions that then lived, and had bed and board, in the British Islands, this man has provided us a greater *pleasure* than any other individual, at whose cost we now enjoy ourselves ; perhaps has done us a greater *service* than can be specially attributed to more than two or three : yet, ungrateful that we are, no written or spoken eulogy of James Boswell any where exists ; his recompense in solid pudding (so far as copyright went) was not excessive ; and as for the empty praise, it has altogether been denied him. Men are unwiser than children ; they do *not* know the hand that feeds them.

Boswell was a person whose mean or bad qualities lay open to the general eye; visible, palpable to the dullest. His good qualities, again, belonged not to the Time he lived in; were far from common then; indeed, in such a degree, were almost unexampled; not recognisable therefore by every one; nay, apt even (so strange had they grown) to be confounded with the very vices they lay contiguous to, and had sprung out of. That he was a wine-bibber and gross liver; gluttonously fond of whatever would yield him a little solacement were it only of a stomachic character, is undeniable enough. That he was vain, heedless, a babbler; had much of the sycophant, alternating with the braggadocio, curiously spiced too with an all-pervading dash of the coxcomb; that he gloried much when the Tailor, by a court-suit, had made a new man of him; that he appeared at the Shakspeare Jubilee with a riband, imprinted 'Corsica Boswell,' round his hat; and in short, if you will, lived no day of his life without doing and saying more than one pretentious ineptitude: all this unhappily is evident as the sun at noon. The very look of Boswell seems to have signified so much. In that cocked nose, cocked partly in triumph over his weaker fellow-creatures, partly to snuff up the smell of coming pleasure, and scent it from afar; in those bag-cheeks, hanging like half-filled wine-skins, still able to contain more; in that coarsely protruded shelf-mouth, that fat dewlapped chin; in all this, who sees not sensuality, pretension, boisterous imbecility enough; much that could not have been ornamental in the temper of a great man's overfed great man (what the Scotch name *flunky*), though it had been more natural there? The under part of Boswell's face is of a low, almost brutish character.

Unfortunately, on the other hand, what great and genuine good lay in him was nowise so self-evident. That Boswell was a hunter after spiritual Notabilities, that he loved such, and longed, and even crept and crawled to be near them; that he first (in old Touchwood Auchinleck's phraseology) "took on with Paoli;" and then being off with "the Corsican landlouper," took on with a schoolmaster, "ane that keeped a schule, and ca'd it an academy:" that he did all

this, and could not help doing it, we account a very singular merit. The man, once for all, had an 'open sense,' an open loving heart, which so few have: where Excellence existed, he was compelled to acknowledge it; was drawn towards it, and (let the old sulphur-brand of a Laird say what he liked) *could not but* walk with it,—if not as superior, if not as equal, then as inferior and lackey, better so than not at all. If we reflect now that this love of Excellence had not only such an evil *nature* to triumph over; but also what an *education* and social position withstood it and weighed it down, its innate strength, victorious over all these things, may astonish us. Consider what an inward impulse there must have been, how many mountains of impediment hurled aside, before the Scottish Laird could, as humble servant, embrace the knees (the bosom was not permitted him) of the English Dominie! Your Scottish Laird, says an English naturalist of these days, may be defined as the hungriest and vainest of all bipeds yet known. Boswell too was a Tory; of quite peculiarly feudal, genealogical, pragmatical temper; had been nurtured in an atmosphere of Heraldry, at the feet of a very Gamaliel in that kind; within bare walls, adorned only with pedigrees, amid serving-men in threadbare livery; all things teaching him, from birth upwards, to remember that a Laird was a Laird. Perhaps there was a special vanity in his very blood: old Auchinleck had, if not the gay, tail-spreading, peacock vanity of his son, no little of the slow-stalking, contentious, hissing vanity of the gander; a still more fatal species. Scottish Advocates will yet tell you how the ancient man, having chanced to be the first sheriff appointed (after the abolition of 'hereditary jurisdictions') by royal authority, was wont, in dull-snuffling pompous tone, to preface many a deliverance from the bench with these words: "I, the first King's Sheriff in Scotland."

And now behold the worthy Bozzy, so prepossessed and held back by nature and by art, fly nevertheless like iron to its magnet, whither his better genius called! You may surround the iron and the magnet with what enclosures and encumbrances you please,—with wood, with rubbish, with brass:

it matters not, the two feel each other, they struggle restlessly towards each other, they *will* be together. The iron may be a Scottish squirelet, full of gulosity and 'gigmanity;'[1] the magnet an English plebeian, and moving rag-and-dust mountain, coarse, proud, irascible, imperious: nevertheless, behold how they embrace, and inseparably cleave to one another! It is one of the strangest phenomena of the past century, that at a time when the old reverent feeling of Discipleship (such as brought men from far countries, with rich gifts, and prostrate soul, to the feet of the Prophets) had passed utterly away from men's practical experience, and was no longer surmised to exist (as it does), perennial, indestructible, in man's inmost heart,—James Boswell should have been the individual, of all others, predestined to recall it, in such singular guise, to the wondering, and, for a long while, laughing and unrecognising world. It has been commonly said, The man's vulgar vanity was all that attached him to Johnson; he delighted to be seen near him, to be thought connected with him. Now let it be at once granted that no consideration springing out of vulgar vanity could well be absent from the mind of James Boswell, in this his intercourse with Johnson, or in any considerable transaction of his life. At the same time, ask yourself: Whether such vanity, and nothing else, actuated him therein; whether this was the true essence and moving principle of the phenomenon, or not rather its outward vesture, and the accidental environment (and defacement) in which it came to light? The man was, by nature and habit, vain; a sycophant-coxcomb, be it granted: but had there been nothing more than vanity in him, was Samuel Johnson the man of men to whom he must attach himself? At the date when Johnson was a poor rusty-coated 'scholar,' dwelling in Temple-lane, and indeed throughout their whole intercourse afterwards, were there not chancellors and prime ministers enough; graceful gentlemen, the glass of fashion; honour-giving noblemen;

[1] 'Q. What do you mean by "respectable?"—A. He always kept a gig.' (*Thurtell's Trial.*)—'Thus,' it has been said, 'does society naturally divide itself into four classes: Noblemen, Gentlemen, Gigmen, and Men.

dinner-giving rich men; renowned fire-eaters, swordsmen, gownsmen; Quacks and Realities of all hues,—any one of whom bulked much larger in the world's eye than Johnson ever did? To any one of whom, by half that submissiveness and assiduity, our Bozzy might have recommended himself; and sat there, the envy of surrounding lickspittles; pocketing now solid emolument, swallowing now well-cooked viands and wines of rich vintage; in each case, also, shone on by some glittering reflex of Renown or Notoriety, so as to be the observed of innumerable observers. To no one of whom, however, though otherwise a most diligent solicitor and purveyor, did he so attach himself: such vulgar courtierships were his paid drudgery, or leisure amusement; the worship of Johnson was his grand, ideal, voluntary business. Does not the frothy-hearted yet enthusiastic man, doffing his Advocate's-wig, regularly take post, and hurry up to London, for the sake of his Sage chiefly; as to a Feast of Tabernacles, the Sabbath of his whole year? The plate-licker and wine-bibber dives into Bolt Court, to sip muddy coffee with a cynical old man, and a sour-tempered blind old woman (feeling the cups, whether they are full, with her finger); and patiently endures contradictions without end; too happy so he may but be allowed to listen and live. Nay, it does not appear that vulgar vanity could ever have been much flattered by Boswell's relation to Johnson. Mr. Croker says, Johnson was, to the last, little regarded by the great world; from which, for a vulgar vanity, all honour, as from its fountain, descends. Bozzy, even among Johnson's friends and special admirers, seems rather to have been laughed at than envied: his officious, whisking, consequential ways, the daily reproofs and rebuffs he underwent, could gain from the world no golden but only leaden opinions. His devout Discipleship seemed nothing more than a mean Spaniclship, in the general eye. His mighty 'constellation,' or sun, round whom he, as satellite, observantly gyrated, was, for the mass of men, but a huge ill-snuffed tallow-light, and he a weak night-moth, circling foolishly, dangerously about it, not knowing what he wanted. If he enjoyed Highland dinners and toasts, as henchman to a

new sort of chieftain, Henry Erskine, in the domestic 'Outer-House,' could hand him a shilling "for the sight of his Bear." Doubtless the man was laughed at, and often heard himself laughed at for his Johnsonism. To be envied is the grand and sole aim of vulgar vanity; to be filled with good things is that of sensuality: for Johnson perhaps no man living *envied* poor Bozzy; and of good things (except himself paid for them) there was no vestige in that acquaintanceship. Had nothing other or better than vanity and sensuality been there, Johnson and Boswell had never come together, or had soon and finally separated again.

In fact, the so copious terrestrial dross that welters chaotically, as the outer sphere of this man's character, does but render for us more remarkable, more touching, the celestial spark of goodness, of light, and Reverence for Wisdom, which dwelt in the interior, and could struggle through such encumbrances, and in some degree illuminate and beautify them. There is much lying yet undeveloped in the love of Boswell for Johnson. A cheering proof, in a time which else utterly wanted and still wants such, that living Wisdom is quite *infinitely* precious to man, is the symbol of the Godlike to him, which even weak eyes may discern; that Loyalty, Discipleship, all that was ever meant by *Hero-worship*, lives perennially in the human bosom, and waits, even in these dead days, only for occasions to unfold it, and inspire all men with it, and again make the world alive! James Boswell we can regard as a practical witness, or real *martyr*, to this high everlasting truth. A wonderful martyr, if you will; and in a time which made such martyrdom doubly wonderful: yet the time and its martyr perhaps suited each other. For a decrepit, death-sick Era, when Cant had first decisively opened her poison-breathing lips to proclaim that God-worship and Mammon-worship were one and the same, that Life was a *Lie*, and the Earth Beelzebub's, which the *Supreme Quack* should inherit; and so all things were fallen into the yellow leaf, and fast hastening to noisome corruption: for such an Era, perhaps no better Prophet than a parti-coloured Zany-Prophet, concealing, from himself and others, his prophetic significance in such unex-

pected vestures,—was deserved, or would have been in place. A precious medicine lay hidden in floods of coarsest, most composite treacle: the world swallowed the treacle, for it suited the world's palate; and now after half a century, may the medicine also begin to show itself! James Boswell belonged, in his corruptible part, to the lowest classes of mankind; a foolish, inflated creature, swimming in an element of self-conceit: but in his corruptible there dwelt an incorruptible, all the more impressive and indubitable for the strange lodging it had taken.

Consider too, with what force, diligence and vivacity he has rendered back all this which, in Johnson's neighbourhood his 'open sense' had so eagerly and freely taken in. That loose-flowing, careless-looking Work of his is as a picture by one of Nature's own Artists; the best possible resemblance of a Reality; like the very image thereof in a clear mirror. Which indeed it was: let but the mirror be *clear*, this is the great point; the picture must and will be genuine. How the babbling Bozzy, inspired only by love, and the recognition and vision which love can lend, epitomises nightly the words of Wisdom, the deeds and aspects of Wisdom, and so, by little and little, unconsciously works together for us a whole *Johnsoniad;* a more free, perfect, sunlit and spirit-speaking likeness, than for many centuries had been drawn by man of man! Scarcely since the days of Homer has the feat been equalled; indeed, in many senses, this also is a kind of Heroic Poem. The fit *Odyssey* of our unheroic age was to be written, not sung; of a Thinker, not of a Fighter; and (for want of a Homer) by the first open soul that might offer,—looked such even through the organs of a Boswell. We do the man's intellectual endowment great wrong, if we measure it by its mere logical outcome; though here too, there is not wanting a light ingenuity, a figurativeness and fanciful sport, with glimpses of insight far deeper than the common. But Boswell's grand intellectual talent was, as such ever is, an *unconscious* one, of far higher reach and significance than Logic; and showed itself in the whole, not in parts. Here again we have that old saying verified, 'The heart sees farther than the head.'

Thus does poor Bozzy stand out to us as an ill-assorted, glaring mixture of the highest and the lowest. What, indeed, is man's life generally, but a kind of beast-godhood ; the god in us triumphing more and more over the beast ; striving more and more to subdue it under his feet? Did not the Ancients, in their wise, perennially significant way, figure Nature itself, their sacred All, or Pan, as a portentous commingling of these two discords ; as musical, humane, oracular in its upper part, yet ending below in the cloven hairy feet of a goat? The union of melodious, celestial Freewill and Reason with foul Irrationality and Lust ; in which, nevertheless, dwelt a mysterious unspeakable Fear and half-mad *panic* Awe ; as for mortals there well might ! And is not man a microcosm, or epitomised mirror of that same Universe ; or rather, is not that Universe even Himself, the reflex of his own fearful and wonderful being, 'the waste fantasy of his own dream?' No wonder that man, that each man, and James Boswell like the others, should resemble it ! The peculiarity in his case was the unusual defect of amalgamation and subordination : the highest lay side by side with the lowest ; not morally combined with it and spiritually transfiguring it, but tumbling in half-mechanical juxtaposition with it, and from time to time, as the mad alternation chanced, irradiating it, or eclipsed by it.

The world, as we said, has been but unjust to him ; discerning only the outer terrestrial and often sordid mass ; without eye, as it generally is, for his inner divine secret ; and thus figuring him nowise as a god Pan, but simply of the bestial species, like the cattle on a thousand hills. Nay, sometimes a strange enough hypothesis has been started of him ; as if it were in virtue even of these same bad qualities that he did his good work; as if it were the very fact of his being among the worst men in this world that had enabled him to write one of the best books therein ! Falser hypothesis, we may venture to say, never rose in human soul. *Bad* is by its nature negative, and can do *nothing ;* whatsoever enables us to *do* anything is by its very nature *good.* Alas, that there should be teachers in Israel, or even learners, to whom this world-ancient fact is still problematical, or even

deniable! Boswell wrote a good Book because he had a heart and an eye to discern wisdom, and an utterance to render it forth; because of his free insight, his lively talent, above all, of his Love and child-like Open-mindedness. His sneaking sycophancies, his greediness and forwardness, whatever was bestial and earthy in him, are so many blemishes in his Book, which still disturb us in its clearness; wholly hindrances, not helps. Towards Johnson, however, his feeling was not Sycophancy, which is the lowest, but Reverence, which is the highest of human feelings. None but a *reverent* man (which so unspeakably few are) could have found his way from Boswell's environment to Johnson's: if such worship for real God-made superiors showed itself also as worship for apparent Tailor-made superiors, even as hollow interested mouth-worship for such,—the case, in this composite human nature of ours, was not miraculous, the more was the pity! But for ourselves, let every one of us cling to this last article of Faith, and know it as the beginning of all knowledge worth the name: That neither James Boswell's good Book, nor any other good thing, in any time or in any place, was, is or can be performed by any man in virtue of his *badness*, but always and solely in spite thereof.

As for the Book itself, questionless the universal favour entertained for it is well merited. In worth as a Book we have rated it beyond any other product of the eighteenth century: all Johnson's own Writings, laborious, and in their kind genuine above most, stand on a quite inferior level to it; already, indeed, they are becoming obsolete for this generation; and for some future generation may be valuable chiefly as Prolegomena and expository Scholia to this *Johnsoniad* of Boswell. Which of us but remembers, as one of the sunny spots in his existence, the day when he opened these airy volumes, fascinating him by a true natural magic! It was as if the curtains of the Past were drawn aside, and we looked mysteriously into a kindred country, where dwelt our Fathers; inexpressibly dear to us, but which had seemed forever hidden from our eyes. For the dead Night had engulfed it; all was gone, vanished as if it had not been. Nevertheless, won-

drously given back to us, there once more it lay; all bright, lucid, blooming; a little island of Creation amid the circumambient Void. There it still lies; like a thing stationary, imperishable, over which changeful Time were now accumulating itself in vain, and could not, any longer, harm it, or hide it.

If we examine by what charm it is that men are still held to this *Life of Johnson*, now when so much else has been forgotten, the main part of the answer will perhaps be found in that speculation 'on the import of *Reality*,' communicated to the world, last month, in this Magazine. The *Johnsoniad* of Boswell turns on objects that in very deed existed; it is all *true*. So far other in melodiousness of tone, it vies with the *Odyssey*, or surpasses it, in this one point: to us these read pages, as those chaunted hexameters were to the first Greek hearers, are in the fullest, deepest sense wholly *credible*. All the wit and wisdom lying embalmed in Boswell's Book, plenteous as these are, could not have saved it. Far more scientific *instruction* (mere excitement and enlightenment of the *thinking power*) can be found in twenty other works of that time, which make but a quite secondary impression on us. The other works of that time, however, fall under one of two classes: Either they are professedly Didactic; and, in that way, mere Abstractions, Philosophic Diagrams, incapable of interesting us much otherwise than as *Euclid's Elements* may do: Or else, with all their vivacity, and pictorial richness of colour, *they are Fictions and not Realities*. Deep truly, as Herr Sauerteig urges, is the force of this consideration: The thing here stated is a fact; these figures, that local habitation, are not shadow but substance. In virtue of such advantages, see how a very Boswell may become Poetical!

Critics insist much on the Poet that he should communicate an 'Infinitude' to his delineation; that by intensity of conception, by that gift of 'transcendental Thought,' which is fitly named *genius*, and inspiration, he should *inform* the Finite with a certain Infinitude of significance; or as they sometimes say, ennoble the Actual into Idealness. They are right in their precept; they mean rightly. But in cases like

this of the *Johnsoniad*, such is the dark grandeur of that 'Time-element,' wherein man's soul here below lives imprisoned,—the Poet's task is, as it were, done to his hand: Time itself, which is the outer veil of Eternity, invests, of its own accord, with an authentic, felt 'infinitude,' whatsoever it has once embraced in its mysterious folds. Consider all that lies in that one word, *Past!* What a pathetic, sacred, in every sense *poetic*, meaning is implied in it; a meaning growing ever the clearer, the farther we recede in Time,—the *more* of that same Past we have to look through!—On which ground indeed must Sauerteig have built, and not without plausibility, in that strange thesis of his: 'That History, after all, is the true Poetry; that Reality, if rightly interpreted, is grander than Fiction; nay that even in the right interpretation of Reality and History does genuine Poetry consist.'

Thus for *Boswell's Life of Johnson* has Time done, is Time still doing, what no ornament of Art or Artifice could have done for it. Rough Samuel and sleek wheedling James *were*, and *are not*. Their Life and whole personal Environment has melted into air. The Mitre Tavern still stands in Fleet Street: but where now is its scot-and-lot paying, beef-and-ale loving, cocked-hatted, pot-bellied Landlord; its rosy-faced assiduous Landlady, with all her shining brass-pans, waxed tables, well-filled larder-shelves; her cooks, and boot-jacks, and errand-boys, and watery-mouthed hangers-on? Gone! Gone! The becking Waiter who, with wreathed smiles, was wont to spread for Samuel and Bozzy their supper of the gods, has long since pocketed his last sixpence; and vanished, sixpences and all, like a ghost at cock-crowing. The Bottles they drank out of are all broken, the Chairs they sat on all rotted and burnt; the very Knives and Forks they ate with have rusted to the heart, and become brown oxide of iron, and mingled with the indiscriminate clay. All, all has vanished; in very deed and truth, like that baseless fabric of Prospero's air-vision. Of the Mitre Tavern nothing but the bare walls remain there: of London, of England, of the World, nothing but the bare walls remain; and these also decaying (were they of adamant), only slower. The mysterious

River of Existence rushes on: a new Billow thereof has arrived, and lashes wildly as ever round the old embankments; but the former Billow with *its* loud, mad eddyings, where is it?—Where!—Now this Book of Boswell's, this is precisely a revocation of the edict of Destiny; so that Time shall not utterly, not so soon by several centuries, have dominion over us. A little row of Naphtha-lamps, with its line of Naphtha-light burns clear and holy through the dead Night of the Past: they who are gone are still here; though hidden they are revealed, though dead they yet speak. There it shines, that little miraculously lamplit Pathway; shedding its feebler and feebler twilight into the boundless dark Oblivion,—for all that our Johnson *touched* has become illuminated for us: on which miraculous little Pathway we can still travel, and see wonders.

It is not speaking with exaggeration, but with strict measured sobriety, to say that this Book of Boswell's will give us more real insight into the *History of England* during those days than twenty other Books, falsely entitled 'Histories,' which take to themselves that special aim. What good is it to me though innumerable Smolletts and Belshams keep dinning in my ears that a man named George the Third was born and bred up, and a man named George the Second died; that Walpole, and the Pelhams, and Chatham, and Rockingham, and Shelburne, and North, with their Coalition or their Separation Ministries, all ousted one another; and vehemently scrambled for 'the thing they called the Rudder of Government, but which was in reality the Spigot of Taxation?' That debates were held, and infinite jarring and jargoning took place; and road-bills and enclosure-bills, and game-bills and India-bills, and Laws which no man can number, which happily few men needed to trouble their heads with beyond the passing moment, were enacted, and printed by the King's Stationer? That he who sat in Chancery, and rayed out speculation from the Woolsack, was now a man that squinted, now a man that did not squint? To the hungry and thirsty mind all this avails next to nothing. These men and these things, we indeed know, did swim, by strength or

by specific levity, as apples or as horse-dung, on the top of the current: but is it by painfully noting the courses, eddyings and bobbings hither and thither of such drift-articles, that you will unfold to me the nature of the current itself; of that mighty-rolling, loud-roaring Life-current, bottomless as the foundations of the Universe, mysterious as its Author? The thing I want to see is not Redbook Lists, and Court Calendars, and Parliamentary Registers, but the LIFE OF MAN in England: what men did, thought, suffered, enjoyed; the form, especially the spirit, of their terrestrial existence, its outward environment, its inward principle; *how* and *what* it was; whence it proceeded, whither it was tending.

Mournful, in truth, is it to behold what the business called 'History,' in these so enlightened and illuminated times, still continues to be. Can you gather from it, read till your eyes go out, any dimmest shadow of an answer to that great question: How men lived and had their being; were but it economically, as what wages they got, and what they bought with these? Unhappily you cannot. History will throw no light on any such matter. At the point where living memory fails, it is all darkness; Mr. Senior and Mr. Sadler must still debate this simplest of all elements in the condition of the Past: Whether men were better off, in their mere larders and pantries, or were worse off than now! History, as it stands all bound up in gilt volumes, is but a shade more instructive than the wooden volumes of a Backgammon-board. How my Prime Minister was appointed is of less moment to me than How my House Servant was hired. In these days, ten ordinary Histories of Kings and Courtiers were well exchanged against the tenth part of one good History of Booksellers.

For example, I would fain know the History of Scotland: who can tell it me? "Robertson," say innumerable voices; "Robertson against the world." I open Robertson; and find there, through long ages too confused for narrative, and fit only to be presented in the way of epitome and distilled essence, a cunning answer and hypothesis, not to this question: By whom, and by what means, when and how, was this fair broad Scotland, with its Arts and Manufactures, Temples,

Schools, Institutions, Poetry, Spirit, National Character, created, and made arable, verdant, peculiar, great, here as I can see some fair section of it lying, kind and strong (like some Bacchus-tamed Lion), from the Castle-hill of Edinburgh? —but to this other question: How did the King keep himself alive in those old days; and restrain so many Butcher-Barons and ravenous Henchmen from utterly extirpating one another, so that killing went on in some sort of moderation? In the one little Letter of Æneas Sylvius, from old Scotland, there is more of History than in all this.—At length, however, we come to a luminous age, interesting enough; to the age of the Reformation. All Scotland is awakened to a second higher life: the Spirit of the Highest stirs in every bosom, agitates every bosom; Scotland is convulsed, fermenting, struggling to body itself forth anew. To the herdsman, among his cattle in remote woods: to the craftsman, in his rude, heath-thatched workshop, among his rude guild-brethren; to the great and to the little, a new light has arisen: in town and hamlet groups are gathered with eloquent looks, and governed or ungovernable tongues; the great and the little go forth together to do battle for the Lord against the mighty. We ask, with breathless eagerness: How was it; how went it on? Let us understand it, let us see it, and know it!—In reply, is handed us a really graceful and most dainty little Scandalous Chronicle (as for some Journal of Fashion) of two persons: Mary Stuart, a Beauty, but over lightheaded; and Henry Darnley, a Booby who had fine legs. How these first courted, billed and cooed, according to nature; then pouted, fretted, grew utterly enraged, and blew one another up with gunpowder: this, and not the History of Scotland, is what we goodnaturedly read. Nay, by other hands, something like a horse-load of other Books have been written to prove that it was the Beauty who blew up the Booby, and that it was not she. Who or what it was, the thing once for all *being* so effectually done, concerns us little. To know Scotland, at that great epoch, were a valuable increase of knowledge: to know poor Darnley, and see him with burning candle, from centre to skin, were no increase of knowledge at all.—Thus is History written.

Hence, indeed, comes it that History, which should be 'the essence of innumerable Biographies,' will tell us, question it as we like, less than one genuine Biography may do, pleasantly and of its own accord! The time is approaching when History will be attempted on quite other principles; when the Court, the Senate, and the Battle-field, receding more and more into the background, the Temple, the Workshop and Social Hearth will advance more and more into the foreground; and History will not content itself with shaping some answer to that question: How were men *taxed* and *kept quiet* then? but will seek to answer this other infinitely wider and higher question: How and what *were men* then? Not our Government only, or the '*House* wherein our life was led,' but the *Life* itself we led there, will be inquired into. Of which latter it may be found that Government, in any modern sense of the word, is after all but a secondary condition: in the mere sense of *Taxation* and *Keeping quiet*, a small, almost a pitiful one.—Meanwhile let us welcome such Boswells, each in his degree, as bring us any genuine contribution, were it never so inadequate, so inconsiderable.

An exception was early taken against this *Life of Johnson*, and all similar enterprises, which we here recommend; and has been transmitted from critic to critic, and repeated in their several dialects, uninterruptedly, ever since: That such jottings-down of careless conversation are an infringement of social privacy; a crime against our highest Freedom, the Freedom of man's intercourse with man. To this accusation, which we have read and heard oftener than enough, might it not be well for once to offer the flattest contradiction, and plea of *Not at all guilty?* Not that conversation is noted down, but that conversation should not deserve noting down, is the evil. Doubtless, if conversation be falsely recorded, then is it simply a Lie; and worthy of being swept, with all despatch, to the Father of Lies. But if, on the other hand, conversation can be authentically recorded, and any one is ready for the task, let him by all means proceed with it; let conversation be kept in remembrance to the latest date possible. Nay, should the consciousness that a man may be

among us 'taking notes' tend, in any measure, to restrict those floods of idle insincere *speech*, with which the *thought* of mankind is wellnigh drowned,—were it other than the most indubitable benefit? He who speaks honestly cares not, needs not care, though his words be preserved to remotest time: for him who speaks *dis*honestly, the fittest of all punishments seems to be this same, which the nature of the case provides. The dishonest speaker, not he only who purposely utters falsehoods, but he who does not purposely, and with sincere heart, utter Truth, and Truth alone; who babbles he knows not what, and has clapped no bridle on his tongue, but lets it run racket, ejecting chatter and futility,—is among the most indisputable malefactors omitted, or inserted, in the Criminal Calendar. To him that will well consider it, idle speaking is precisely the beginning of all Hollowness, Halfness, *Infidelity* (want of Faithfulness); the genial atmosphere in which rank weeds of every kind attain the mastery over noble fruits in man's life, and utterly choke them out: one of the most crying maladies of these days, and to be testified against, and in all ways to the uttermost withstood. Wise, of a wisdom far beyond our shallow depth, was that old precept: *Watch thy tongue;* out of it are the issues of Life! 'Man is properly an *incarnated word:*' the *word* that he speaks is the *man* himself. Were eyes put into our head, that we might *see;* or only that we might fancy, and plausibly pretend, we had *seen?* Was the tongue suspended there, that it might tell truly what we had seen, and make man the soul's-brother of man; or only that it might utter vain sounds, jargon, soul-confusing, and so *divide* man, as by enchanted walls of Darkness, from union with man? Thou who wearest that cunning, heaven-made organ, a Tongue, think well of this. Speak not, I passionately entreat thee, till thy thought have silently matured itself, till thou have other than mad and mad-making noises to emit: *hold thy tongue* (thou hast it a-holding) till *some* meaning lie behind, to set it wagging. Consider the significance of Silence: it is boundless, never by meditating to be exhausted; unspeakably profitable to thee! Cease that chaotic hubbub, wherein thy own soul runs to waste, to confused suicidal dis-

location and stupor: out of Silence comes thy strength. 'Speech is silvern, Silence is golden; Speech is human, Silence is divine.' Fool! thinkest thou that because no Boswell is there with ass-skin and blacklead to note thy jargon, it therefore dies and is harmless? Nothing dies, nothing can die. No idlest word thou speakest but is a seed cast into Time, and grows through all Eternity! The Recording Angel, consider it well, is no fable, but the truest of truths: the paper tablets thou canst burn; of the 'iron leaf' there is no burning.—Truly, if we can permit God Almighty to note down our conversation, thinking it good enough for Him,—any poor Boswell need not scruple to work his will of it.

Leaving now this our English *Odyssey*, with its Singer and Scholiast, let us come to the *Ulysses;* that great Samuel Johnson himself, the far-experienced, 'much-enduring man,' whose labours and pilgrimage are here sung. A full-length image of his Existence has been preserved for us: and he, perhaps of all living Englishmen, was the one who best deserved that honour. For if it is true, and now almost proverbial, that 'the Life of the lowest mortal, if faithfully recorded, would be interesting to the highest;' how much more when the mortal in question was already distinguished in fortune and natural quality, so that his thinkings and doings were not significant of himself only, but of large masses of mankind! 'There is not a man whom I meet on the streets,' says one, 'but I could like, were it otherwise convenient, to know his Biography:' nevertheless, could an enlightened curiosity be so far gratified, it must be owned the Biography of most ought to be, in an extreme degree, *summary.* In this world, there is so wonderfully little self-subsistence among men; next to no originality (though never absolutely *none*): one Life is too servilely the copy of another; and so in whole thousands of them you find little that is properly new; nothing but the old song sung by a new voice, with better or worse execution, here and there an ornamental quaver, and false notes enough: but the fundamental tune is ever the same; and for the *words*, these, all that they meant stands written generally on the Church-

yard-stone: *Natus sum; esuriebam, quærebam; nunc repletus requiesco.* Mankind sail their Life-voyage in huge fleets, following some single whale-fishing or herring-fishing Commodore: the logbook of each differs not, in essential purport, from that of any other: nay the most have no legible logbook (reflection, observation not being among their talents); keep no reckoning, only *keep in sight* of the flagship,—and fish. Read the Commodore's papers (know *his* Life); and even your lover of that street Biography will have learned the most of what he sought after.

Or, the servile *imitancy*, and yet also a nobler relationship and mysterious union to one another which lies in such imitancy, of Mankind might be illustrated under the different figure, itself nowise *original*, of a Flock of Sheep. Sheep go in flocks for three reasons: First, because they are of a gregarious temper, and *love* to be together: Secondly, because of their cowardice; they are afraid to be left alone: Thirdly, because the common run of them are dull of sight, to a proverb, and can have no choice in roads; sheep can in fact *see* nothing; in a celestial Luminary, and a scoured pewter Tankard, would discern only that both dazzled them, and were of unspeakable glory. How like their fellow-creatures of the human species! Men too, as was from the first maintained here, are gregarious; then surely faint-hearted enough, trembling to be left by-themselves; above all, dull-sighted, down to the verge of utter blindness. Thus are we seen ever running in torrents, and mobs, if we run at all; and after what foolish scoured Tankards, mistaking them for Suns! Foolish Turnip-lanterns likewise, to all appearance supernatural, keep whole nations quaking, their hair on end. Neither know we, except by blind habit, where the good pastures lie: solely when the sweet grass is between our teeth, we know it, and chew it; also when grass is bitter and scant, we know it,—and bleat and butt: these last two facts we know of a truth and in very deed. Thus do Men and Sheep play their parts on this Nether Earth; wandering restlessly in large masses, they know not whither; for most part, each following his neighbour and his own nose.

Nevertheless, not always; look better, you shall find certain that do, in some small degree, *know whither.* Sheep have their Bell-wether; some ram of the folds, endued with more valour, with clearer vision than other sheep; he leads them through the wolds, by height and hollow, to the woods and water-courses, for covert or for pleasant provender: courageously marching, and if need be leaping, and with hoof and horn doing battle in the van: him they courageously and with assured heart follow. Touching it is, as every herdsman will inform you, with what chivalrous devotedness these woolly Hosts adhere to their Wether; and rush after him, through good report and through bad report, were it into safe shelters and green thymy nooks, or into asphaltic lakes and the jaws of devouring lions. Ever also must we recall that fact which we owe Jean Paul's quick eye: 'If you hold a stick before the Wether, so that he, by necessity, leaps in passing you, and then withdraw your stick, the Flock will nevertheless all leap as he did; and the thousandth sheep shall be found impetuously vaulting over air, as the first did over an otherwise impassable barrier.' Reader, wouldst thou understand Society, ponder well those ovine proceedings; thou wilt find them all curiously significant.

Now if sheep always, how much more must men always, have their Chief, their Guide! Man too is by nature quite thoroughly *gregarious:* nay, ever he struggles to be something more, to be *social;* not even when Society has become impossible, does that deep-seated tendency and effort forsake him. Man, as if by miraculous magic, imparts his Thoughts, his Mood of mind to man; an unspeakable communion binds all past, present and future men into one indissoluble whole, almost into one living individual. Of which high, mysterious Truth, this disposition to *imitate*, to lead and be led, this impossibility *not* to imitate, is the most constant, and one of the simplest manifestations. To imitate! which of us all can measure the significance that lies in that one word? By virtue of which the infant Man, born at Woolsthorpe, grows up not to be a hairy Savage and chewer of Acorns, but an Isaac Newton and Discoverer of Solar Systems!—Thus both in a celes-

tial and terrestrial sense are we a *Flock*, such as there is no other: nay, looking away from the base and ludicrous to the sublime and sacred side of the matter (since in every matter there are two sides), have not we also a SHEPHERD, 'if we will but hear his voice?' Of those stupid multitudes there is no one but has an immortal Soul within him; a reflex and living image of God's whole Universe: strangely, from its dim environment, the light of the Highest looks through him;—for which reason, indeed, it is that we claim a brotherhood with him, and so love to know his History, and come into clearer and clearer union with all that he feels, and says, and does.

However, the chief thing to be noted was this: Amid those dull millions, who, as a dull flock, roll hither and thither, whithersoever they are led; and seem all sightless and slavish, accomplishing, attempting little save what the animal instinct in its somewhat higher kind might teach, To keep themselves and their young ones alive,—are scattered here and there superior natures, whose eye is not destitute of free vision, nor their heart of free volition. These latter, therefore, examine and determine, not what others do, but what it is right to do; towards which, and which only, will they, with such force as is given them, resolutely endeavour: for if the Machine, living or inanimate, is merely *fed*, or desires to be fed, and so *works;* the Person can *will*, and so *do*. These are properly our Men, our Great Men; the guides of the dull host,—which follows them as by an irrevocable decree. They are the chosen of the world: they had this rare faculty not only of 'supposing' and 'inclining to think,' but of *knowing* and *believing;* the nature of their being was, that they lived not by Hearsay, but by clear Vision; while others hovered and swam along, in the grand Vanity-fair of the World, blinded by the mere Shows of things, these saw into the Things themselves, and could walk as men having an eternal loadstar, and with their feet on sure paths. Thus was there a *Reality* in their existence; something of a perennial character; in virtue of which indeed it is that the memory of them is perennial. Whoso belongs only to his own age, and reverences only *its* gilt Popinjays or soot-smeared Mumbojumbos, must needs

die with it: though he have been crowned seven times in the Capitol, or seventy and seven times, and Rumour have blown his praises to all the four winds, deafening every ear therewith,—it avails not; there was nothing universal, nothing eternal in him; he must fade away, even as the Popinjay-gildings and Scarecrow-apparel, which he could not see through. The great man does, in good truth, belong to his own age; nay, more so than any other man; being properly the synopsis and epitome of such age with its interests and influences: but belongs likewise to all ages, otherwise he is not great. What was transitory in him passes away; and an immortal part remains, the significance of which is in strict speech inexhaustible,—as that of every *real* object is. Aloft, conspicuous, on his enduring basis, he stands there, serene, unaltering; silently addresses to every new generation a new lesson and monition. Well is his Life worth writing, worth interpreting; and ever, in the new dialect of new times, of rewriting and re-interpreting.

Of such chosen men was Samuel Johnson: not ranking among the highest, or even the high, yet distinctly admitted into that sacred band; whose existence was no idle Dream, but a Reality which he transacted *awake;* nowise a Clothes-horse and Patent Digester, but a genuine Man. By nature he was gifted for the noblest of earthly tasks, that of Priesthood, and Guidance of mankind; by destiny, moreover, he was appointed to this task, and did actually, according to strength, fulfil the same: so that always the question, *How; in what spirit; under what shape?* remains for us to be asked and answered concerning him. For as the highest Gospel was a Biography, so is the Life of every good man still an indubitable Gospel, and preaches to the eye and heart and whole man, so that Devils even must believe and tremble, these gladdest tidings: "Man is heaven-born; not the thrall of Circumstances, of Necessity, but the victorious subduer thereof: behold how he can become the 'Announcer of himself and of his Freedom;' and is ever what the Thinker has named him, 'the Messias of Nature!'"—Yes, Reader, all this that thou hast so often heard about 'force of circumstances,'

'the creature of the time,' 'balancing of motives,' and who knows what melancholy stuff to the like purport, wherein thou, as in a nightmare Dream, sittest paralysed, and hast no force left,—was in very truth, if Johnson and waking men are to be credited, little other than a hagridden vision of death-sleep; some *half*-fact, more fatal at times than a whole falsehood. Shake it off; awake; up and be doing, even as it is given thee!

The Contradiction which yawns wide enough in every Life, which it is the meaning and task of Life to reconcile, was in Johnson's wider than in most. Seldom, for any man, has the contrast between the ethereal heavenward side of things, and the dark sordid earthward, been more glaring: whether we look at Nature's work with him or Fortune's, from first to last, heterogeneity, as of sunbeams and miry clay, is on all hands manifest. Whereby indeed, only this was declared, That *much Life* had been given him; many things to triumph over, a great work to *do*. Happily also he did it; better than the most.

Nature had given him a high, keen-visioned, almost poetic soul; yet withal imprisoned it in an inert, unsightly body: he that could never rest had not limbs that would move with him, but only roll and waddle: the inward eye, all-penetrating, all-embracing, must look through bodily windows that were dim, half-blinded; he so loved men, and 'never once *saw* the human face divine!' Not less did he prize the love of men; he was eminently social; the approbation of his fellows was dear to him, 'valuable,' as he owned, 'if from the meanest of human beings:' yet the first impression he produced on every man was to be one of aversion, almost of disgust. By Nature it was farther ordered that the imperious Johnson should be born poor: the ruler-soul, strong in its native royalty, generous, uncontrollable, like the lion of the woods, was to be housed, then, in such a dwelling-place of Disfigurement, Disease, and lastly of a Poverty which itself made him the servant of servants. Thus was the born king likewise a born slave: the divine spirit of Music must awake imprisoned amid dull-croaking universal Discords; the Ariel

finds himself encased in the coarse hulls of a Caliban. So is it more or less, we know (and thou, O Reader, knowest and feelest even now), with all men: yet with the fewest men in any such degree as with Johnson.

Fortune, moreover, which had so managed his first appearance in the world, lets not her hand lie idle, or turn the other way, but works unweariedly in the same spirit, while he is journeying through the world. What such a mind, stamped of Nature's noblest metal, though in so ungainly a die, was specially and best of all fitted for, might still be a question. To none of the world's few Incorporated Guilds could he have adjusted himself without difficulty, without distortion; in none been a Guild-Brother well at ease. Perhaps, if we look to the strictly practical nature of his faculty, to the strength, decision, method that manifests itself in him, we may say that his calling was rather towards Active than Speculative life; that as Statesman (in the higher, now obsolete sense), Lawgiver, Ruler, in short, as Doer of the Work, he had shone even more than as Speaker of the Word. His honesty of heart, his courageous temper, the value he set on things outward and material, might have made him a King among Kings. Had the golden age of those new French Prophets, when it shall be *à chacun selon sa capacité, à chaque capacité selon ses œuvres*, but arrived! Indeed, even in our brazen and Birmingham-lacker age, he himself regretted that he had not become a Lawyer, and risen to be Chancellor, which he might well have done. However, it was otherwise appointed. To no man does Fortune throw open all the kingdoms of this world, and say, It is thine; choose where thou wilt dwell! To the most she opens hardly the smallest cranny or doghutch, and says, not without asperity: There, that is thine while thou canst keep it; nestle thyself there, and bless Heaven! Alas, men must fit themselves into many things: some forty years ago, for instance, the noblest and ablest Man in all the British lands might be seen not swaying the royal sceptre, or the pontiff's censer, on the pinnacle of the World, but gauging ale-tubs in the little burgh of Dumfries! Johnson came a little nearer the mark than Burns: but with him

too, 'Strength was mournfully denied its arena;' he too had to fight Fortune at strange odds, all his life long.

Johnson's disposition for *royalty* (had the Fates so ordered it) is well seen in early boyhood. 'His favourites,' says Boswell, 'used to receive very liberal assistance from him; and such was the submission and deference with which he was treated, that three of the boys, of whom Mr. Hector was sometimes one, used to come in the morning as his humble attendants, and carry him to school. One in the middle stooped, while he sat upon his back, and one on each side supported him; and thus was he borne triumphant.' The purfly, sand-blind lubber and blubber, with his open mouth, and face of bruised honeycomb; yet already dominant, imperial, irresistible! Not in the 'King's-chair' (of human arms), as we see, do his three satellites carry him along: rather on the *Tyrant's-saddle*, the back of his fellow-creature, must he ride prosperous!—The child is father of the man. He who had seen fifty years into coming Time, would have felt that little spectacle of mischievous schoolboys to be a great one. For us, who look back on it, and what followed it, now from afar, there arise questions enough: How looked these urchins? What jackets and galligaskins had they; felt headgear, or of dog-skin leather? What was old Lichfield doing then; what thinking?—and so on, through the whole series of Corporal Trim's 'auxiliary verbs.' A picture of it all fashions itself together;—only unhappily we have no brush, and no fingers.

Boyhood is now past; the ferula of Pedagogue waves harmless, in the distance: Samuel has struggled up to uncouth bulk and youthhood, wrestling with Disease and Poverty, all the way; which two continue still his companions. At College we see little of him; yet thus much, that things went not well. A rugged wildman of the desert, awakened to the feeling of himself; proud as the proudest, poor as the poorest; stoically shut up, silently enduring the incurable: what a world of blackest gloom, with sun-gleams and pale tearful moon-gleams, and flickerings of a celestial and an infernal splendour, is this that now opened for him! But the weather was wintry; and the toes of the man are looking

through his shoes. His muddy features grow of a purple and sea-green colour; a flood of black indignation mantling beneath. A truculent, raw-boned figure! Meat he has probably little; hope he has less; his feet, as we said, have come into brotherhood with the cold mire.

'Shall I be particular,' inquires Sir John Hawkins, 'and relate a circumstance of his distress, that cannot be imputed to him as an effect of his own extravagance or irregularity, and consequently reflects no disgrace on his memory? He had scarce any change of raiment, and, in a short time after Corbet left him, but one pair of shoes, and those so old that his feet were seen through them: a gentleman of his college, the father of an eminent clergyman now living, directed a servitor one morning to place a new pair at the door of Johnson's chamber; who seeing them upon his first going out, so far forgot himself and the spirit which must have actuated his unknown benefactor, that, with all the indignation of an insulted man, he threw them away.'

How exceedingly surprising!—The Rev. Dr. Hall remarks: 'As far as we can judge from a cursory view of the weekly account in the buttery-books, Johnson appears to have lived as well as other commoners and scholars.' Alas! such 'cursory view of the buttery-books,' now from the safe distance of a century, in the safe chair of a College Mastership, is one thing; the continual view of the empty or locked buttery itself was quite a different thing. But hear our Knight, how he farther discourses. 'Johnson,' quoth Sir John, could 'not at this early period of his life divest himself of an idea that poverty was disgraceful, and was very severe in his censures of that economy in both our Universities, which exacted at meals the attendance of poor scholars, under the several denominations of Servitors in the one, and Sizers in the other: he thought that the scholar's, like the Christian life, levelled all distinctions of rank and worldly preëminence; but in this he was *mistaken:* civil polity' &c. &c.—Too true! It is man's lot to err.

However, Destiny, in all ways, means to prove the mistaken Samuel, and see what stuff is in him. He must leave these

butteries of Oxford, Want like an armed man compelling him; retreat into his father's mean home; and there abandon himself for a season to inaction, disappointment, shame and nervous melancholy nigh run mad: he is probably the wretchedest man in wide England. In all ways, he too must 'become perfect through *suffering*.'—High thoughts have visited him; his College Exercises have been praised beyond the walls of College; Pope himself has seen that *Translation*, and approved of it: Samuel had whispered to himself: I too am 'one and somewhat.' False thoughts; that leave only misery behind! The fever-fire of Ambition is too painfully extinguished (but not cured) in the frost-bath of Poverty. Johnson has knocked at the gate, as one having a right; but there was no opening: the world lies all encircled as with brass; nowhere can he find or force the smallest entrance. An ushership at Market Bosworth, and 'a disagreement between him and Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of the school,' yields him bread of affliction and water of affliction; but so bitter, that unassisted human nature cannot swallow them. Young Samson will grind no more in the Philistine mill of Bosworth; quits hold of Sir Wolstan, and the 'domestic chaplaincy, so far at least as to say grace at table,' and also to be 'treated with what he represented as intolerable harshness;' and so, after 'some months of such complicated misery,' feeling doubtless that there are worse things in the world than quick death by Famine, 'relinquishes a situation, which all his life afterwards he recollected with the strongest aversion, and even horror.' Men like Johnson are properly called the Forlorn Hope of the World: judge whether his hope was forlorn or not, by this Letter to a dull oily Printer, who called himself *Sylvanus Urban*:

'Sir,—As you appear no less sensible than your readers of the defect of your poetical article, you will not be displeased if (in order to the improvement of it) I communicate to you the sentiments of a person who will undertake, on reasonable terms, sometimes to fill a column.

'His opinion is, that the public would,' &c. &c.

'If such a correspondence will be agreeable to you, be

pleased to inform me in two posts, what the conditions are on which you shall expect it. Your late offer (for a Prize Poem) gives me no reason to distrust your generosity. If you engage in any literary projects besides this paper, I have other designs to impart.'

Reader, the generous person, to whom this letter goes addressed, is 'Mr. Edmund Cave, at St. John's Gate, London;' the addressor of it is Samuel Johnson, in Birmingham, Warwickshire.

Nevertheless, Life rallies in the man; reasserts its right to be *lived*, even to be enjoyed. 'Better a small bush,' say the Scotch, 'than no shelter:' Johnson learns to be contented with humble human things; and is there not already an actual realised human Existence, all stirring and living on every hand of him? Go thou and do likewise! In Birmingham itself, with his own purchased goose-quill, he can earn 'five guineas;' nay, finally, the choicest terrestrial good: a Friend, who will be Wife to him! Johnson's marriage with the good Widow Porter has been treated with ridicule by many mortals, who apparently had no understanding thereof. That the purblind, seamy-faced Wildman, stalking lonely, woe-stricken, like some Irish Gallowglass with peeled club, whose speech no man knew, whose look all men both laughed at and shuddered at, should find any brave female heart to acknowledge, at first sight and hearing of him, "This is the most sensible man I ever met with;" and then with generous courage, to take him to itself, and say, Be thou mine; be thou warmed here, and thawed to life!—in all this, in the kind Widow's love and pity for him, in Johnson's love and gratitude, there is actually no matter for ridicule. Their wedded life, as is the common lot, was made up of drizzle and dry weather; but innocence and worth dwelt in it; and when death had ended it, a certain sacredness: Johnson's deathless affection for his Tetty was always venerable and noble. However, be this as it might, Johnson is now minded to wed; and will live by the trade of Pedagogy, for by this also may life be kept in. Let the world therefore take notice: '*At Edial*

near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded, and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by—SAMUEL JOHNSON.' Had this Edial enterprise prospered, how different might the issue have been! Johnson had lived a life of unnoticed nobleness, or swoln into some amorphous Dr. Parr, of no avail to us; Bozzy would have dwindled into official insignificance, or risen by some other elevation; old Auchinleck had never been afflicted with "ane that keeped a schule," or obliged to violate hospitality by a "Cromwell do? God, sir, he gart kings ken that there was a *lith* in their neck!" But the Edial enterprise did not prosper; Destiny had other work appointed for Samuel Johnson; and young gentlemen got board where they could elsewhere find it. This man was to become a Teacher of grown gentlemen, in the most surprising way; a Man of Letters, and Ruler of the British Nation for some time,—not of their bodies merely, but of their minds, not *over* them but *in* them.

The career of Literature could not in Johnson's day, any more than now, be said to lie along the shores of a Pactolus: whatever else might be gathered there, gold-dust was nowise the chief produce. The world, from the times of Socrates, St. Paul, and far earlier, has always had its Teachers; and always treated them in a peculiar way. A shrewd Townclerk (not of Ephesus), once, in founding a Burgh-Seminary, when the question came, How the Schoolmasters should be maintained? delivered this brief counsel: "D—n them, keep them *poor!*" Considerable wisdom may lie in this aphorism. At all events, we see, the world has acted on it long, and indeed improved on it,—putting many a Schoolmaster of its great Burgh-Seminary to a death, which even *cost* it something. The world, it is true, had for some time been too busy to go out of its way, and *put* any Author to death; however, the old sentence pronounced against them was found to be pretty sufficient. The first Writers, being Monks, were sworn to a vow of Poverty; the modern Authors had no need to swear to it. This was the epoch when an Otway could still die of hunger; not to speak of your innumerable Scrogginses, whom

'the Muse found stretched beneath a rug,' with 'rusty grate unconscious of a fire,' stocking-nightcap, sanded floor, and all the other escutcheons of the craft, time out of mind the heir-looms of Authorship. Scroggins, however, seems to have been but an idler; not at all so diligent as worthy Mr. Boyce, whom we might have seen *sitting up* in bed, with his wearing-apparel of Blanket about him, and a hole slit in the same, that his hand might be at liberty to work in its vocation. The worst was, that too frequently a blackguard recklessness of temper ensued, incapable of turning to account what good the gods even here had provided: your Boyces acted on some stoico-epicurean principle of *carpe diem*, as men do in bombarded towns, and seasons of raging pestilence;—and so had lost not only their life, and presence of mind, but their status as persons of respectability. The trade of Author was at about one of its lowest ebbs when Johnson embarked on it.

Accordingly we find no mention of Illuminations in the city of London, when this same Ruler of the British Nation arrived in it: no cannon-salvos are fired; no flourish of drums and trumpets greets his appearance on the scene. He enters quite quietly, with some copper halfpence in his pocket; creeps into lodgings in Exeter Street, Strand; and has a Coronation Pontiff also, of not less peculiar equipment, whom, with all submissiveness, he must wait upon, in his Vatican of St. John's Gate. This is the dull oily Printer alluded to above.

'Cave's temper,' says our Knight Hawkins, 'was phlegmatic: though he assumed, as the publisher of the Magazine, the name of Sylvanus Urban, he had few of those qualities that constitute urbanity. Judge of his want of them by this question, which he once put to an author: "Mr. ——, I hear you have just published a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it upon the subject of music: did you write that yourself?" His discernment was also slow; and as he had already at his command some writers of prose and verse, who, in the language of Booksellers, are called good hands, he was the backwarder in making advances, or courting an intimacy with Johnson. Upon the first approach of a stranger, his practice was to continue sitting; a posture in

which he was ever to be found, and for a few minutes to continue silent: if at any time he was inclined to begin the discourse, it was generally by putting a leaf of the Magazine, then in the press, into the hand of his visitor, and asking his opinion of it. * * *

'He was so incompetent a judge of Johnson's abilities, that meaning at one time to dazzle him with the splendour of some of those luminaries in Literature, who favoured him with their correspondence, he told him that if he would, in the evening, be at a certain alehouse in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, he might have a chance of seeing Mr. Browne and another or two of those illustrious contributors: Johnson accepted the invitation; and being introduced by Cave, dressed in a loose horseman's coat, and such a great bushy wig as he constantly wore, to the sight of Mr. Browne, whom he found sitting at the upper end of a long table, in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, had his curiosity gratified.'[1]

In fact, if we look seriously into the condition of Authorship at that period, we shall find that Johnson had undertaken one of the ruggedest of all possible enterprises; that here as elsewhere Fortune had given him unspeakable Contradictions to reconcile. For a man of Johnson's stamp, the Problem was twofold: *First*, not only as the humble but indispensable condition of all else, to keep himself, if so might be, *alive;* but *secondly*, to keep himself alive by speaking forth the *Truth* that was in him, and speaking it *truly*, that is, in the clearest and fittest utterance the Heavens had enabled him to give it, let the Earth say to this what she liked. Of which twofold Problem if it be hard to solve either member separately, how incalculably more so to solve it, when both are conjoined, and work with endless complication into one another! He that finds himself already *kept alive* can sometimes (unhappily not always) speak a little truth; he that finds himself able and willing, to all lengths, to *speak lies*, may, by watching how the wind sits, scrape together a livelihood, sometimes of great splendour: he, again, who finds himself provided with *neither* endowment, has but a ticklish game to play, and shall have praises if he win it. Let us look a little at both faces of the

[1] Hawkins, pp. 46–50.

matter ; and see what front they then offered our Adventurer, what front he offered them.

At the time of Johnson's appearance on the field, Literature, in many senses, was in a transitional state ; chiefly in this sense, as respects the pecuniary subsistence of its cultivators. It was in the very act of passing from the protection of Patrons into that of the Public ; no longer to supply its necessities by laudatory Dedications to the Great, but by judicious Bargains with the Booksellers. This happy change has been much sung and celebrated ; many a 'lord of the lion heart and eagle eye' looking back with scorn enough on the bygone system of Dependency : so that now it were perhaps well to consider, for a moment, what good might also be in it, what gratitude we owe it. That a good was in it, admits not of doubt. Whatsoever has existed has had its value : without some truth and worth lying in it, the thing could not have hung together, and been the organ and sustenance, and method of action, for men that reasoned and were alive. Translate a Falsehood which is wholly false into Practice, the result comes out *zero ;* there is no fruit or issue to be derived from it. That in an age, when a Nobleman was still noble, still with his wealth the protector of worthy and humane things, and still venerated as such, a poor Man of Genius, his brother in nobleness, should, with unfeigned reverence, address him and say : "I have found Wisdom here, and would feign proclaim it abroad ; wilt thou, of thy abundance, afford me the means ?"—in all this there was no baseness ; it was wholly an honest proposal, which a free man might make, and a free man listen to. So might a Tasso, with a *Gerusalemme* in his hand or in his head, speak to a Duke of Ferrara ; so might a Shakspeare to his Southampton : and Continental Artists generally to their rich Protectors,—in some countries, down almost to these days. It was only when the reverence became *feigned*, that baseness entered into the transaction on both sides ; and, indeed, flourished there with rapid luxuriance, till that became disgraceful for a Dryden, which a Shakspeare could once practice without offence.

Neither, it is very true, was the new way of Bookseller

Mecænasship worthless ; which opened itself at this juncture, for the most important of all transport-trades, now when the old way had become too miry and impassable. Remark, moreover, how this second sort of Mecænasship, after carrying us through nearly a century of Literary Time, appears now to have wellnigh discharged *its* function also ; and to be working pretty rapidly towards some *third* method, the exact conditions of which are yet nowise visible. Thus all things have their end ; and we should part with them all, not in anger, but in peace. The Bookseller-System, during its peculiar century, the whole of the eighteenth, did carry us handsomely along ; and many good Works it has left us, and many good Men it maintained : if it is now expiring by PUFFERY, as the Patronage System did by FLATTERY (for *Lying* is ever the forerunner of Death, nay is itself Death), let us not forget its benefits ; how it nursed Literature through boyhood and school-years, as Patronage had wrapped it in soft swaddling-bands ;—till now we see it about to put on the *toga virilis*, could it but *find* any such.

There is tolerable travelling on the beaten road, run how it may ; only on the new road not yet levelled and paved, and on the old road all broken into ruts and quagmires, is the travelling bad or impracticable. The difficulty lies always in the *transition* from one method to another. In which state it was that Johnson now found Literature ; and out of which, let us also say, he manfully carried it. What remarkable mortal *first paid copyright* in England we have not ascertained ; perhaps for almost a century before, some scarce visible or ponderable pittance of wages had occasionally been yielded by the Seller of Books to the Writer of them : the original Covenant, stipulating to produce *Paradise Lost* on the one hand, and *Five Pounds Sterling* on the other, still lies (we have been told) in black-on-white, for inspection and purchase by the curious, at a Bookshop in Chancery Lane. Thus had the matter gone on, in a mixed confused way, for some threescore years ;—as ever, in such things, the old system *overlaps* the new, by some generation or two, and only dies quite out when the new has got a complete organization, and weather-worthy

surface of its own. Among the first Authors, the very first of any significance, who lived by the day's wages of his craft, and composedly faced the world on that basis, was Samuel Johnson.

At the time of Johnson's appearance, there were still two ways, on which an Author might attempt proceeding: there were the Mecænases proper in the West End of London, and the Mecænases virtual of St. John's Gate and Paternoster Row. To a considerate man it might seem uncertain which method were preferable: neither had very high attractions; the Patron's aid was now wellnigh *necessarily* polluted by sycophancy, before it could come to hand; the Bookseller's was deformed with greedy stupidity, not to say entire wooden-headedness and disgust (so that an Osborne even required to be knocked down, by an author of spirit), and could barely keep the thread of life together. The one was the wages of suffering and poverty; the other, unless you gave strict heed to it, the wages of sin. In time, Johnson had opportunity of looking into both methods, and ascertaining what they were; but found, at first trial, that the former would in nowise do for him. Listen, once again, to that far-famed Blast of Doom, proclaiming into the ear of Lord Chesterfield, and, through him, of the listening world, that patronage should be no more!

'Seven years, my Lord, have now passed, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my Work [1] through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance,[2] one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour.

[1] The *English Dictionary.*

[2] Were time and printer's space of no value, it were easy to wash away certain foolish soot-stains dropped here as 'Notes;' especially two: the one on this word, and on Boswell's Note to it; the other on the paragraph which follows. Let 'ED.' look a second time; he will find that Johnson's sacred regard for *Truth* is the only thing to be 'noted,' in the former case also, in the latter, that this of 'Love's being a native of the rocks' actually *has* a 'meaning.'

'The Shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

'Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it. I hope, it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations, where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

'Having carried on my Work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning; I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less: for I have long been awakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation.

'My Lord, your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

And thus must the rebellious 'Sam Johnson' turn him to the Bookselling guild, and the wondrous chaos of 'Author by trade;' and, though ushered into it only by that dull oily Printer, 'with loose horseman's coat and such a great bushy wig as he constantly wore,' and only as subaltern to some commanding-officer 'Browne, sitting amid tobacco-smoke at the head of a long table in the alehouse at Clerkenwell,'—gird himself together for the warfare; having no alternative!

Little less contradictory was that other branch of the twofold Problem now set before Johnson: the speaking forth of *Truth*. Nay taken by itself, it had in those days become so complex as to puzzle strongest heads, with nothing else imposed on them for solution; and even to turn high heads of that sort into mere hollow *vizards*, speaking neither truth nor falsehood, nor anything but what the Prompter and Player (ὑποκριτής) put into them. Alas! for poor Johnson Contradiction abounded; in spirituals and in temporals, within and without. Born with the strongest unconquerable love of just Insight, he must begin to live and learn in a scene where

Prejudice flourishes with rank luxuriance. England was all confused enough, sightless and yet restless, take it where you would; but figure the best intellect in England nursed up to manhood in the idol-cavern of a poor Tradesman's house, in the cathedral city of Lichfield! What is Truth? said jesting Pilate. What is Truth? might earnest Johnson much more emphatically say. Truth, no longer, like the Phœnix, in rainbow plumage, poured, from her glittering beak, such tones of sweetest melody as took captive every ear: the Phœnix (waxing old) had wellnigh ceased her singing, and empty wearisome Cuckoos, and doleful monotonous Owls, innumerable Jays also, and twittering Sparrows on the housetop, pretended they were repeating her.

It was wholly a divided age, that of Johnson; Unity existed nowhere, in its Heaven, or in its Earth. Society, through every fibre, was rent asunder: all things, it was then becoming visible, but could not then be understood, were moving onwards, with an impulse received ages before, yet now first with a decisive rapidity, towards that great chaotic gulf, where, whether in the shape of French Revolutions, Reform Bills, or what shape soever, bloody or bloodless, the descent and engulfment assume, we now see them weltering and boiling. Already Cant, as once before hinted, had begun to play its wonderful part, for the hour was come: two ghastly Apparitions, unreal *simulacra* both, HYPOCRISY and ATHEISM are already, in silence, parting the world. Opinion and Action, which should live together as wedded pair, 'one flesh,' more properly as Soul and Body, have commenced their open quarrel, and are suing for a separate maintenance,—as if they could exist separately. To the earnest mind, in any position, firm footing and a life of Truth was becoming daily more difficult: in Johnson's position, it was more difficult than in almost any other.

If, as for a devout nature was inevitable and indispensable, he looked up to Religion, as to the polestar of his voyage, already there was no *fixed* polestar any longer visible; but two stars, a whole constellation of stars, each proclaiming itself as the true. There was the red portentous comet-star of infidel-

ity; the dim fixed-star, burning ever dimmer, uncertain now whether not an atmospheric *meteor*, of Orthodoxy: which of these to choose? The keener intellects of Europe had, almost without exception, ranged themselves under the former: for some half century, it had been the general effort of European speculation to proclaim that Destruction of Falsehood was the only Truth; daily had Denial waxed stronger and stronger, Belief sunk more and more into decay. From our Bolingbrokes and Tolands the sceptical fever had passed into France, into Scotland; and already it smouldered, far and wide, secretly eating out the heart of England. Bayle had played his part; Voltaire, on a wider theatre, was playing his,—Johnson's senior by some fifteen years: Hume and Johnson were children almost of the same year.[1] To this keener order of intellects did Johnson's indisputably belong: was he to join them; was he to oppose them? A complicated question: for, alas, the Church itself is no longer, even to him, wholly of true adamant, but of adamant and baked mud conjoined: the zealously Devout must find his Church tottering; and pause amazed to see, instead of inspired Priest, many a swine-feeding Trulliber ministering at her altar. It is not the least curious of the incoherences which Johnson had to reconcile, that, though by nature contemptuous and incredulous, he was, at that time of day, to find his safety and glory in defending, with his whole might, the traditions of the elders.

Not less perplexingly intricate, and on both sides hollow or questionable, was the aspect of Politics. Whigs struggling blindly forward, Tories holding blindly back; each with some forecast of a half truth; neither with any forecast of the whole! Admire here this other Contradiction in the life of Johnson; that, though the most ungovernable, and in practice the most independent of men, he must be a Jacobite, and worshipper of the Divine Right. In Politics also there are Irreconcilables enough for him. As, indeed, how could it be otherwise? For when Religion is torn asunder, and the very heart of man's existence set against itself, then in all subordinate departments there must needs be hollowness, incoherence. The English Na-

[1] Johnson, September, 1709; Hume, April, 1711.

tion had rebelled against a Tyrant; and, by the hands of religious tyrannicides, exacted stern vengeance of him: Democracy had risen iron-sinewed, and, 'like an infant Hercules, strangled serpents in its cradle.' But as yet none knew the meaning or extent of the phenomenon: Europe was not ripe for it; not to be ripened for it, but by the culture and various experience of another century and a half. And now, when the King-killers were all swept away, and a milder *second* picture was painted over the canvas of the *first*, and betitled 'Glorious Revolution,' who doubted but the catastrophe was over, the whole business finished, and Democracy gone to its long sleep? Yet was it like a business finished and not finished; a lingering uneasiness dwelt in all minds: the deep-lying, resistless Tendency, which had still to be *obeyed*, could no longer be *recognised;* thus was there halfness, insincerity, uncertainty in men's ways; instead of heroic Puritans and heroic Cavaliers, came now a dawdling set of argumentative Whigs, and a dawdling set of deaf-eared Tories; each half-foolish, each half-false. The Whigs were false and without basis; inasmuch as their whole object was Resistance, Criticism, Demolition,—they knew not why, or towards what issue. In Whiggism, ever since a Charles and his Jeffries had ceased to meddle with it, and to have any Russel or Sydney to meddle with, there could be no divineness of character; not till, in these latter days, it took the figure of a thorough-going all-defying Radicalism, was there any solid footing for it to stand on. Of the like uncertain, half-hollow nature had Toryism become, in Johnson's time; preaching forth indeed an everlasting truth, the duty of Loyalty; yet now, ever since the final expulsion of the Stuarts, having no *person*, but only an *Office* to be loyal to; no living *Soul* to worship, but only a dead velvet-cushioned *Chair*. Its attitude, therefore, was stiff-necked refusal to move; as that of Whiggism was clamorous command to move,—let rhyme and reason, on both hands, say to it what they might. The consequence was: Immeasurable floods of contentious jargon, tending no-whither; false conviction; false resistance to conviction; decay (ultimately to become decease) of whatsoever was once understood by the

words, *Principle, or Honesty* of heart; the louder and louder triumph of *Half*ness and Plausibility over *Whole*ness and Truth; —at last, this all-overshadowing efflorescence of Quackery, which we now see, with all its deadening and killing fruits, in all its innumerable branches, down to the lowest. How, between these jarring extremes, wherein the rotten lay so inextricably intermingled with the sound, and as yet no eye could see through the ulterior meaning of the matter, was a faithful and true man to adjust himself?

That Johnson, in spite of all drawbacks, adopted the Conservative side; stationed himself as the unyielding opponent of Innovation, resolute to hold fast the form of sound words, could not but increase, in no small measure, the difficulties he had to strive with. We mean, the *moral* difficulties; for in *economical* respects, it might be pretty equally balanced; the Tory servant of the Public had perhaps about the same chance of promotion as the Whig: and all the promotion Johnson aimed at was the privilege *to live*. But, for what, though unavowed, was no less indispensable, for his peace of conscience, and the clear ascertainment and feeling of his Duty as an inhabitant of God's world, the case was hereby rendered much more complex. To resist Innovation is easy enough on one condition: that you resist Inquiry. This is and was, the common expedient of your common Conservatives; but it would not do for Johnson: he was a zealous recommender and practiser of Inquiry; once for all could not and would not believe, much less speak and act, a Falsehood: the *form* of sound words, which he held fast, must have a *meaning* in it. Here lay the difficulty: to behold a portentous mixture of True and False, and feel that he must dwell and fight there; yet to love and defend only the True. How worship, when you cannot and will not be an idolater; yet cannot help discerning that the Symbol of your Divinity has half become idolatrous? This was the question, which Johnson, the man both of clear eye and devout believing heart, must answer,—at peril of his life. The Whig or Sceptic, on the other hand, had a much simpler part to play. To him only the idolatrous side of things, nowise the divine

one, lay visible ; not *worship*, therefore, nay, in the strict sense not heart-honesty, only at most lip and hand-honesty, is required of him. What spiritual force is his, he can conscientiously employ in the work of cavilling, of pulling down what is False. For the rest, that there is or can be any Truth of a higher than sensual nature, has not occurred to him. The utmost, therefore, that he as man has to aim at, is Respectability, the suffrages of his fellow-men. Such suffrages he may weigh as well as count ; or count only : according as he is a Burke, or a Wilkes. But beyond these there lies nothing divine for him ; these attained, all is attained. Thus is his whole world distinct and rounded-in ; a clear goal is set before him ; a firm path, rougher or smoother ; at worst a firm region wherein to seek a path : let him gird up his loins, and travel on without misgivings ! For the honest Conservative, again, nothing is distinct, nothing rounded-in : Respectability can nowise be his highest Godhead ; not one aim, but two conflicting aims to be continually reconciled by him, has he to strive after. A difficult position, as we said ; which accordingly the most did, even in those days, but half defend : by the surrender, namely, of their own too cumbersome *honesty*, or even *understanding ;* after which the completest defence was worth little. Into this difficult position Johnson, nevertheless, threw himself : found it indeed full of difficulties ; yet held it out manfully, as an honest-hearted, open-sighted man, while life was in him.

Such was that same 'twofold Problem' set before Samuel Johnson. Consider all these moral difficulties ; and add to them the fearful aggravation, which lay in that other circumstance, that he needed a continual appeal to the Public, must continually produce a certain impression and conviction on the Public ; that if he did not, he ceased to have 'provision for the day that was passing over him,' he could not any longer live ! How a vulgar character, once launched into this wild element ; driven onwards by Fear and Famine ; without other aim than to clutch what Provender (of Enjoyment in any kind) he could get, always if possible keeping *quite* clear of the Gallows and Pillory, that is to say, minding heedfully both 'per-

son' and 'character,'—would have floated hither and thither in it; and contrived to eat some three repasts daily, and wear some three suits yearly, and then to depart and disappear, having consumed his last ration: all this might be worth knowing, but were in itself a trivial knowledge. How a noble man, resolute for the Truth, to whom Shams and Lies were once for all an abomination, was to act in it: *here* lay the mystery. By what methods, by what gifts of eye and hand, does a heroic Samuel Johnson, now when cast forth into that waste Chaos of Authorship, maddest of things, a mingled Phlegethon and Fleet-ditch, with its floating lumber, and sea-krakens, and mud-spectres,—shape himself a voyage; of the *transient* driftwood, and the *enduring* iron, build him a sea-worthy Life-boat, and sail therein, undrowned, unpolluted, through the roaring 'mother of dead dogs,' onwards to an eternal Landmark, and City that hath foundations? This high question is even the one answered in Boswell's Book; which Book we therefore, not so falsely, have named a *Heroic Poem;* for in it there lies the whole argument of such. Glory to our brave Samuel! He accomplished this wonderful Problem; and now through long generations, we point to him, and say: Here also was a Man; let the world once more have assurance of a Man!

Had there been in Johnson, now when afloat on that confusion worse confounded of grandeur and squalor, no light but an earthly outward one, he too must have made shipwreck. With his diseased body, and vehement voracious heart, how easy for him to become a *carpe-diem* Philosopher, like the rest, and live and die as miserably as any Boyce of that Brotherhood! But happily there was a higher light for him; shining as a lamp to his path; which, in all paths, would teach him to act and walk not as a fool, but as wise, and in those evil days too 'redeeming the time.' Under dimmer or clearer manifestations, a Truth had been revealed to him: I also am a Man; even in this unutterable element of Authorship, I may live as beseems a Man! That Wrong is not only different from Right, but that it is in strict scientific terms *infinitely* different; even as the gaining of the

whole world set against the losing of one's own soul, or (as Johnson had it) a Heaven set against a Hell; that in all situations out of the Pit of Tophet, wherein a living Man has stood or can stand, there is actually a Prize of quite *infinite* value placed within his reach, namely a *Duty* for him to do: this highest Gospel, which forms the basis and worth of all other Gospels whatsoever, had been revealed to Samuel Johnson; and the man had believed it, and laid it faithfully to heart. Such knowledge of the *transcendental*, immeasurable character of Duty, we call the basis of all Gospels, the essence of all Religion: he who with his whole soul knows not this, as yet knows nothing, as yet *is* properly nothing.

This, happily for him, Johnson was one of those that knew: under a certain authentic Symbol, it stood forever present to his eyes: a Symbol, indeed, waxing old as doth a garment; yet which had guided forward, as their Banner and celestial Pillar of Fire, innumerable saints and witnesses, the fathers of our modern world; and for him also had still a sacred significance. It does not appear that, at any time, Johnson was what we call irreligious: but in his sorrows and isolation, when hope died away, and only a long vista of suffering and toil lay before him to the end, then first did Religion shine forth in its meek, everlasting clearness; even as the stars do in black night, which in the daytime and dusk were hidden by inferior lights. How a true man, in the midst of errors and uncertainties, shall work out for himself a sure Life-truth; and adjusting the transient to the eternal, amid the fragments of ruined Temples build up, with toil and pain, a little Altar for himself, and worship there; how Samuel Johnson, in the era of Voltaire, can purify and fortify his soul, and hold real communion with the Highest, 'in the Church of St. Clement Danes:' this too stands all unfolded in his Biography, and is among the most touching and memorable things there; a thing to be looked at with pity, admiration, awe. Johnson's Religion was as the light of life to him; without it, his heart was all sick, dark and had no guidance left.

He is now enlisted, or impressed, into that unspeakable shoeblack-seraph Army of Authors; but can feel hereby that

he fights under a celestial flag, and will quit him like a man. The first grand requisite, an assured heart, he therefore has: what his outward equipments and accoutrements are, is the next question; an important, though inferior one. His intellectual stock, intrinsically viewed, is perhaps inconsiderable: the furnishings of an English School and English University; good knowledge of the Latin tongue, a more uncertain one of Greek: this is a rather slender stock of Education wherewith to front the world. But then it is to be remembered that his world was England; that such was the culture England commonly supplied and expected. Besides Johnson has been a voracious reader, though a desultory one, and oftenest in strange scholastic, too obsolete Libraries; he has also rubbed shoulders with the press of Actual Life, for some thirty years now: views or hallucinations of innumerable things are weltering to and fro in him. Above all, be his weapons what they may, he has an arm that can wield them. Nature has given him her choicest gift,—an open eye and heart. He will look on the world, wheresoever he can catch a glimpse of it, with eager curiosity: to the last, we find this a striking characteristic of him; for all human interests he has a sense; the meanest handicraftsman could interest him, even in extreme age, by speaking of his craft: the ways of men are all interesting to him; any human thing, that he did not know, he wished to know. Reflection, moreover, Meditation, was what he practised incessantly, with or without his will: for the mind of the man was earnest, deep as well as humane. Thus would the world, such fragments of it as he could survey, form itself, or continually tend to form itself, into a coherent Whole; on any and on all phases of which, his vote and voice must be well worth listening to. As a Speaker of the Word, he will speak real words; no idle jargon, or hollow triviality will issue from him. His aim too is clear, attainable; that of *working for his wages;* let him *do* this honestly, and all else will follow of its own accord.

With such omens, into such a warfare, did Johnson go forth. A rugged hungry Kerne or Gallowglass, as we called him: yet indomitable; in whom lay the true spirit of a Soldier.

With giant's force he toils, since such is his appointment, were it but at hewing of wood and drawing of water for old sedentary bushy-wigged Cave; distinguishes himself by mere quantity, if there is to be no other distinction. He can write all things; frosty Latin verses, if these are the saleable commodity; Book-prefaces, Political Philippics, Review Articles, Parliamentary Debates: all things he does rapidly; still more surprising, all things he does thoroughly and well. How he sits there, in his rough-hewn, amorphous bulk, in that upper-room at St. John's Gate, and trundles-off sheet after sheet of those Senate-of-Lilliput Debates, to the clamorous Printer's Devils waiting for them, with insatiable throat, down stairs; himself perhaps *impransus* all the while! Admire also the greatness of Literature; how a grain of mustard-seed cast into its Nile-waters, shall settle in the teeming mould, and be found, one day, as a Tree, in whose branches all the fowls of heaven may lodge. Was it not so with these Lilliput Debates? In that small project and act began the stupendous FOURTH ESTATE; whose wide world-embracing influences what eye can take in; in whose boughs are there not already fowls of strange feather lodged? Such things, and far stranger, were done in that wondrous old Portal, even in latter times. And then figure Samuel dining 'behind the screen,' from a trencher covertly handed in to him at a preconcerted nod from the 'great bushy wig;' Samuel too ragged to show face, yet 'made a happy man of' by hearing his praise spoken. If to Johnson himself, then much more to us, may that St. John's Gate be a place we can 'never pass without veneration.'[1]

[1] All Johnson's places of resort and abode are venerable, and now indeed to the many as well as to the few; for his name has become great; and, as we must often with a kind of sad admiration recognise, there is, even to the rudest man, no greatness so venerable as intellectual, as spiritual greatness; nay properly there is no other venerable at all. For example, what soul subduing magic, for the very clown or craftsman of our England, lies in the word 'Scholar!' "He is a Scholar:" he is a man *wiser* than we; of a wisdom to us *boundless*, infinite: who shall speak his worth! Such things, we say, fill us with a certain pathetic admiration of defaced and obstructed yet glorious man; archangel though in

Poverty, Distress, and as yet Obscurity, are his companions: so poor is he that his Wife must leave him, and seek shelter among other relations; Johnson's household has accommodation for one inmate only. To all his ever-varying, ever-recurring troubles, moreover, must be added this continual one of ill-health, and its concomitant depressiveness: a galling load, which would have crushed most common mortals into desperation, is his appointed ballast and life-burden; he 'could not remember the day he had passed free from pain.' Nevertheless, Life, as we said before, is always Life: a healthy soul, imprison it as you will, in squalid garrets, shabby coat, bodily sickness, or whatever else, will assert its heaven-granted indefeasible Freedom, its right to conquer

ruins,—or rather, though in *rubbish*, of encumbrances and mud-incrustations, which also are not to be perpetual.

Nevertheless, in this mad-whirling all-forgetting London, the haunts of the mighty that were can seldom without a strange difficulty be discovered. Will any man, for instance, tell us which *bricks* it was in Lincoln's Inn Buildings that Ben Jonson's hand and trowel laid? No man, it is to be feared,—and also grumbled at. With Samuel Johnson may it prove otherwise! A Gentleman of the British Museum is said to have made drawings of all *his* residences: the blessing of Old Mortality be upon him. We ourselves, not without labour and risk, lately discovered GOUGH SQUARE, between Fleet Street and Holborn (adjoining both to BOLT COURT and JOHNSON'S COURT); and, on the second day of search, the very House there, wherein the *English Dictionary* was composed. It is the first or corner house on the right hand, as you enter through the arched way from the North-west. The actual occupant, an elderly, well-washed, decent-looking man, invited us to enter; and courteously undertook to be *cicerone*; though in his memory lay nothing but the foolishest jumble and hallucination. It is a stout old-fashioned, oak-balustraded house: "I have spent many a pound and penny on it since then," said the worthy Landlord: "here, you see, this Bedroom was the Doctor's study; that was the garden" (a plot of delved ground somewhat larger than a bed-quilt) "where he walked for exercise; these three garret Bedrooms" (where his three Copyists sat and wrote) "were the place he kept his—*Pupils* in!" *Tempus edax rerum!* Yet *ferax* also: for our friend now added, with a wistful look, which strove to seem merely historical: "I let it all in Lodgings, to respectable gentlemen; by the quarter, or the month; it's all one to me."—"To me also," whispered the Ghost of Samuel, as we went pensively our ways.

difficulties, to do work, even to feel gladness. Johnson does not whine over his existence, but manfully makes the most and best of it. 'He said, a man might live in a garret at eighteenpence a-week: few people would inquire where he lodged; and if they did, it was easy to say, "Sir, I am to be found at such a place." By spending threepence in a coffee-house, he might be for some hours every day in very good company; he might dine for sixpence, breakfast on bread-and-milk for a penny, and do without supper. On *clean-shirt-day* he went abroad, and paid visits.' Think by whom, and of whom this was uttered, and ask then, Whether there is more pathos in it than in a whole circulating-library of *Giaours* and *Harolds*, or less pathos? On another occasion, 'when Dr. Johnson, one day, read his own Satire, in which the life of a scholar is painted, with the various obstructions thrown in his way to fortune and to fame, he burst into a passion of tears: Mr. Thrale's family and Mr. Scott only were present, who, in a jocose way, clapped him on the back, and said, "What's all this, my dear sir? Why you and I and *Hercules*, you know, were all troubled with *melancholy*." He was a very large man, and made-out the 'triumvirate with Johnson and Hercules comically enough.' These were sweet tears; the sweet victorious remembrance lay in them of toils indeed frightful, yet never flinched from, and now triumphed over. 'One day it shall delight you also to remember labour done!'—Neither, though Johnson is obscure and poor, need the highest enjoyment of existence, that of heart freely communing with heart, be denied him. Savage and he wander homeless through the streets; without bed, yet not without friendly converse; such another conversation not, it is like, producible in the proudest drawing-room of London. Nor, under the void Night, upon the hard pavement, are their own woes the only topic: nowise; they "will stand by their country," the two 'Backwoodsmen' of the Brick Desert!

Of all outward evils Obscurity is perhaps in itself the least. To Johnson, as to a healthy-minded man, the fantastic article, sold or given under the title of *Fame*, had little or no value but its intrinsic one. He prized it as the means of get-

ting him employment and good wages; scarcely as anything more. His light and guidance came from a loftier source; of which, in honest aversion to all hypocrisy or pretentious talk, he spoke not to men; nay perhaps, being of a *healthy* mind, had never spoken to himself. We reckon it a striking fact in Johnson's history, this carelessness of his to Fame. Most authors speak of their 'Fame' as if it were a quite priceless matter; the grand ultimatum, and heavenly Constantine's-Banner they had to follow, and conquer under.—Thy 'Fame!' Unhappy mortal, where will it and thou both be in some fifty years? Shakspeare himself has lasted but two hundred; Homer (partly by accident) three thousand: and does not already an ETERNITY encircle every *Me* and every *Thee?* Cease, then, to sit feverishly hatching on that 'Fame' of thine; and flapping, and shrieking with fierce hisses, likebrood-goose on her last egg, if man shall or dare approach it! Quarrel not with me, hate me not, my Brother: make what thou canst of thy egg, and welcome, God knows, I will not steal it; I believe it to be *addle.*—Johnson, for his part, was no man to be killed by a review, concerning which matter, it was said by a benevolent person, If any author *can* be reviewed to death, let it be, with all convenient despatch, *done.* Johnson thankfully receives any word spoken in his favour; is nowise disobliged by a lampoon, but will look at it, if pointed out to him, and show how it might have been done better: the lampoon itself is indeed *nothing*, a soap-bubble that, next moment, will become a drop of sour suds; but in the mean while, if it do anything, it keeps him more in the world's eye, and the next *bargain* will be all the richer: "Sir, if they should cease to talk of me, I must starve." Sound heart and understanding head: these fail no man, not even a Man of Letters!

Obscurity, however, was, in Johnson's case, whether a light or heavy evil, likely to be no lasting one. He is animated by the spirit of a true *workman*, resolute to do his work well; and he *does* his work well; all his work, that of writing, that of living. A man of this stamp is unhappily not so common in the literary or in any other department of the world, that he can continue always unnoticed. By slow degrees, John-

son emerges; looming, at first, huge and dim in the eye of an observant few; at last disclosed, in his real proportions, to the eye of the whole world, and encircled with a 'light-nimbus' of glory, so that whoso is not blind must and shall behold him. By slow degrees, we said; for this also is notable; slow but sure: as his fame waxes not by exaggerated clamour of what he *seems* to be, but by better and better insight of what he *is*, so it will last and stand wearing, being genuine. Thus indeed is it always, or nearly always, with true fame. The heavenly Luminary rises amid vapours: stargazers enough must scan it, with critical telescopes; it makes no blazing, the world can either look at it, or forbear looking at it; not till after a time and times, does its celestial eternal nature become indubitable. Pleasant, on the other hand, is the blazing of a Tarbarrel; the crowd dance merrily round it, with loud huzzaing, universal three-times-three, and, like Homer's peasants, 'bless the useful light;' but unhappily it so soon ends in darkness, foul choking smoke; and is kicked into the gutters, a nameless imbroglio of charred staves, pitch-cinders and *vomissement du diable!*

But indeed, from of old, Johnson has enjoyed all or nearly all that Fame can yield any man: the respect, the obedience of those that are about him and inferior to him; of those whose opinion alone can have any forcible impression on him. A little circle gathers round the Wise man; which gradually enlarges as the report thereof spreads, and more can come to see, and to believe; for Wisdom is precious, and of irresistible attraction to all. 'An inspired-idiot,' Goldsmith, hangs strangely about him; though, as Hawkins says, 'he loved not Johnson, but rather envied him for his parts; and once entreated a friend to desist from praising him, "for in doing so," said he, "you harrow up my very soul!"' Yet, on the whole, there is no evil in the 'gooseberry-fool;' but rather much good; of a finer, if of a weaker, sort than Johnson's; and all the more genuine that he himself could never become *conscious* of it,—though unhappily never cease *attempting* to become so: the Author of the genuine *Vicar of Wakefield*, nill he, will he, must needs fly towards such a mass of gen-

uine Manhood; and Dr. Minor keep gyrating round Dr. Major, alternately attracted and repelled. Then there is the chivalrous Topham Beauclerk, with his sharp wit, and gallant courtly ways: there is Bennet Langton, an orthodox gentleman, and worthy; though Johnson once laughed, louder almost than mortal, at his last will and testament; and 'could not stop his merriment, but continued it all the way till he got without the Temple-gate; then burst into such a fit of laughter that he appeared to be almost in a convulsion; and, in order to support himself, laid hold of one of the posts at the side of the foot-pavement, and sent forth peals so loud that, in the silence of the night, his voice seemed to resound from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch!' Lastly comes his solid thinking, solid-feeding Thrale, the well-beloved man; with *Thralia*, a bright papilionaceous creature, whom the elephant loved to play with, and wave to and fro upon his trunk. Not to speak of a reverent Bozzy, for what need is there farther? —Or of the spiritual Luminaries, with tongue or pen, who made that age remarkable; or of Highland Lairds drinking, in fierce usquebaugh, "Your health, Doctor Shonson!"—Still less of many such as that poor 'Mr. F. Lewis,' older in date, of whose birth, death and whole terrestrial *res gestæ*, this only, and strange enough this actually, survives: "Sir, he lived in London, and hung loose upon society!" *Stat* Parvi *nominis umbra.*—

In his fifty-third year, he is beneficed, by the royal bounty, with a Pension of three-hundred pounds. Loud clamour is always more or less insane: but probably the insanest of all loud clamours in the eighteenth century was this that was raised about Johnson's Pension. Men seem to be led by the noses: but in reality, it is by the ears,—as some ancient slaves were, who had their ears bored; or as some modern quadrupeds may be, whose ears are long. Very falsely was it said, 'Names do not change Things.' Names do change Things; nay for most part they are the only substance, which mankind can discern in Things. The whole sum that Johnson, during the remaining twenty-two years of his life, drew from the public funds of England, would have supported

some Supreme Priest for about half as many weeks; it amounts very nearly to the revenue of our poorest Church-Overseer for one twelvemonth. Of secular Administrators of Provinces, and Horse-subduers, and Game-destroyers, we shall not so much as speak: but who were the Primates of England, and the Primates of all England, during Johnson's days? No man has remembered. Again, is the Primate of all England something, or is he nothing? If something, then what but the man who, in the supreme degree, teaches and spiritually edifies, and leads towards Heaven by guiding wisely through the Earth, the living souls that inhabit England? We touch here upon deep matters; which but remotely concern us, and might lead us into still deeper: clear, in the mean while, it is that the true Spiritual Edifier and Soul's-Father of all England was, and till very lately continued to be, the man named Samuel Johnson,—whom this scot-and-lot-paying world cackled reproachfully to see remunerated like a Supervisor of Excise!

If Destiny had beaten hard on poor Samuel, and did never cease to visit him too roughly, yet the last section of his Life might be pronounced victorious, and on the whole happy. He was not idle; but now no longer goaded on by want; the light which had shone irradiating the dark haunts of Poverty, now illuminates the circles of Wealth, of a certain culture and elegant intelligence; he who had once been admitted to speak with Edmund Cave and Tobacco Browne, now admits a Reynolds and a Burke to speak with him. Loving friends are there; Listeners, even Answerers: the fruit of his long labours lies round him in fair legible Writings, of Philosophy, Eloquence, Morality, Philology; some excellent, all worthy and genuine Works; for which too, a deep, earnest murmur of thanks reaches him from all ends of his Fatherland. Nay there are works of Goodness, of undying Mercy, which even he has possessed the power to do: 'What I gave I have; what I spent I had!' Early friends had long sunk into the grave; yet in his soul they ever lived, fresh and clear, with soft pious breathings towards them, not without a still hope of one day meeting them again in purer union. Such was

Johnson's Life: the victorious Battle of a free, true Man. Finally he died the death of the free and true: a dark cloud of Death, solemn and not untinged with halos of immortal Hope, 'took him away,' and our eyes could no longer behold him; but can still behold the trace and impress of his courageous, honest spirit, deep-legible in the World's Business, wheresoever he walked and was.

To estimate the quantity of Work that Johnson performed, how much poorer the World were had it wanted him, can, as in all such cases, never be accurately done; cannot, till after some longer space, be approximately done. All work is as seed sown; it grows and spreads, and sows itself anew, and so, in endless palingenesia, lives and works. To Johnson's Writings, good and solid, and still profitable as they are, we have already rated his Life and Conversation as superior. By the one and by the other, who shall compute what effects have been produced, and are still, and into deep Time, producing?

So much, however, we can already see: It is now some three quarters of a century that Johnson has been the Prophet of the English; the man by whose light the English people, in public and in private, more than by any other man's, have guided their existence. Higher light than that immediately *practical* one; higher virtue than an honest PRUDENCE, he could not then communicate; nor perhaps could they have received: such light, such virtue, however, he did communicate. How to thread this labyrinthic Time, the fallen and falling Ruin of Times; to silence vain Scruples, hold firm to the last the fragments of old Belief, and with earnest eye still discern some glimpses of a true path, and go forward thereon, 'in a world where there is much to be done, and little to be known:' this is what Samuel Johnson, by act and word, taught his Nation; what his Nation received and learned of him, more than of any other. We can view him as the preserver and transmitter of whatsoever was genuine in the spirit of Toryism; which genuine spirit, it is now becoming manifest, must again embody itself in all new forms of Society, be what they may, that are to exist, and have continuance—elsewhere than on

Paper. The *last* in many things, Johnson was the last genuine Tory; the last of Englishmen who, with strong voice and wholly-believing heart, preached the Doctrine of Standing still; who, without selfishness or slavishness, reverenced the existing Powers, and could assert the privileges of rank, though himself poor, neglected and plebeian; who had heart-devoutness with heart-hatred of cant, was orthodox-religious with his eyes open; and in all things and everywhere spoke out in plain English, from a soul wherein jesuitism could find no harbour, and with the front and tone not of a diplomatist, but of a man.

This last of the Tories was Johnson: not Burke, as is often said; Burke was essentially a Whig, and only, on reaching the verge of the chasm towards which Whiggism from the first was inevitably leading, recoiled; and, like a man vehement rather than earnest, a resplendent far-sighted Rhetorician rather than a deep sure Thinker, recoiled with no measure, convulsively, and damaging what he drove back with him.

In a world which exists by the balance of Antagonisms, the respective merit of the Conservator and the Innovator must ever remain debatable. Great, in the mean while, and undoubted for both sides, is the merit of him who, in a day of Change, walks wisely, honestly. Johnson's aim was in itself an impossible one: this of stemming the eternal Flood of Time; of clutching all things, and anchoring them down, and saying, Move not!—how could it, or should it, ever have success? The strongest man can but retard the current partially and for a short hour. Yet even in such shortest retardation, may not an inestimable value lie? If England has escaped the blood-bath of a French Revolution; and may yet, in virtue of this delay and of the experience it has given, work out her deliverance calmly into a new Era, let Samuel Johnson, beyond all contemporary or succeeding men, have the praise for it. We said above that he was appointed to be Ruler of the British Nation for a season: whoso will look beyond the surface, into the heart of the world's movements, may find that all Pitt Administrations, and Continental Subsidies, and Waterloo victories, rested on the possibility of

making England, yet a little while, *Toryish*, Loyal to the Old; and this again on the anterior reality, that the Wise had found such Loyalty still practicable, and recommendable. England had its Hume, as France had its Voltaires and Diderots; but the Johnson was peculiar to us.

If we ask now, by what endowment it mainly was that Johnson realised such a Life for himself and others; what quality of character the main phenomena of his Life may be most naturally deduced from, and his other qualities most naturally subordinated to, in our conception of him, perhaps the answer were: The quality of Courage, of Valour; that Johnson was a Brave Man. The Courage that can go forth, once and away, to Chalk-Farm, and have itself shot, and snuffed out, with decency, is nowise wholly what we mean here. Such courage we indeed esteem an exceeding small matter; capable of coexisting with a life full of falsehood, feebleness, poltroonery and despicability. Nay oftener it is Cowardice rather that produces the result: for consider, Is the Chalk-Farm Pistoleer inspired with any reasonable Belief and Determination; or is he hounded-on by haggard indefinable Fear,—how he will be *cut* at public places, and 'plucked geese of the neighbourhood' will wag their tongues at him a plucked goose? If he go then, and be shot without shrieking or audible uproar, it is well for him: nevertheless there is nothing amazing in it. Courage to manage all this has not perhaps been denied to any man or to any woman. Thus, do not recruiting sergeants drum through the streets of manufacturing towns, and collect ragged losels enough; every one of whom, if once dressed in red, and trained a little, will receive fire cheerfully for the small sum of one shilling *per diem*, and have the soul blown out of him at last, with perfect propriety. The Courage that dares only *die*, is on the whole no sublime affair; necessary indeed, yet universal; pitiful when it begins to parade itself. On this Globe of ours, there are some thirty-six persons that manifest it, seldom with the smallest failure, during every second of time. Nay look at Newgate: do not the offscourings of Creation, when condemned to the gallows as if they were not men but vermin,

walk thither with decency, and even to the scowls and hootings of the whole Universe give their stern good-night in silence? What is to be undergone only once, we may undergo; what must be, comes almost of its own accord. Considered as Duellist, what a poor figure does the fiercest Irish Whiskerando make, compared with any English Game-cock, such as you may buy for fifteenpence!

The Courage we desire and prize is not the Courage to die decently, but to live manfully. This, when by God's grace it has been given, lies deep in the soul; like genial heat, fosters all other virtues and gifts; without it they could not live. In spite of our innumerable Waterloos and Peterloos, and such campaigning as there has been, this Courage we allude to, and call the only true one, is perhaps rarer in these last ages, than it has been in any other since the Saxon Invasion under Hengist. Altogether extinct it can never be among men; otherwise the species Man were no longer for this world: here and there, in all times, under various guises, men are sent hither not only to demonstrate but exhibit it, and testify, as from heart to heart, that it is still possible, still practicable.

Johnson, in the eighteenth century, and as Man of Letters, was one of such; and, in good truth, 'the bravest of the brave.' What mortal could have more to war with? Yet, as we saw, he yielded not, faltered not; he fought, and even, such was his blessedness, prevailed. Whoso will understand what it is to have a man's heart, may find that, since the time of John Milton, no braver heart had beat in any English bosom than Samuel Johnson now bore. Observe too that he never called himself brave, never felt himself to be so; the more completely *was* so. No Giant Despair, no Golgotha Death-dance or Sorcerer's-Sabbath of 'Literary Life in London,' appalls this pilgrim; he works resolutely for deliverance; in still defiance, steps stoutly along. The thing that is given him to do, he can make himself do; what is to be endured, he can endure in silence.

How the great soul of old Samuel, consuming daily his own bitter unalleviable allotment of misery and toil, shows beside the poor flimsy little soul of young Boswell; one day flaunt

ing in the ring of vanity, tarrying by the wine-cup and crying, Aha, the wine is red ; the next day deploring his downpressed, night-shaded, quite poor estate, and thinking it unkind that the whole movement of the Universe should go on, while *his* digestive-apparatus had stopped ! We reckon Johnson's 'talent of silence' to be among his great and too rare gifts. Where there is nothing farther to be done, there shall nothing farther be said : like his own poor blind Welsh-woman, he accomplished somewhat, and also 'endured fifty years of wretchedness with unshaken fortitude.' How grim was Life to him ; a sick Prison-house and Doubting-castle ! 'His great business,' he would profess, 'was to escape from himself.' Yet towards all this he has taken his position and resolution ; can dismiss it all 'with frigid indifference, having little to hope or to fear.' Friends are stupid, and pusillanimous, and parsimonious ; 'wearied of his stay, yet offended at his departure :' it is the manner of the world. 'By popular delusion,' remarks he with a gigantic calmness, 'illiterate writers will rise into renown :' it is portion of the History of English Literature ; a perennial thing, this same popular delusion ; and will—alter the character of the Language.

Closely connected with this quality of Valour, partly as springing from it, partly as protected by it, are the more recognisable qualities of Truthfulness in word and thought, and Honesty in action. There is a reciprocity of influence here : for as the realising of Truthfulness and Honesty is the life-light and great aim of Valour, so without Valour they cannot, in anywise, be realised. Now, in spite of all practical shortcomings, no one that sees into the significance of Johnson, will say that his prime object was not Truth. In conversation, doubtless, you may observe him, on occasion, fighting as if for victory ;—and must pardon these ebulliences of a careless hour, which were not without temptation and provocation. Remark likewise two things : that such prize-arguings were ever on merely superficial debatable questions ; and then that they were argued generally by the fair laws of battle and logic-fence, by one cunning in that same. If their purpose was excusable, their effect was harmless, perhaps beneficial :

that of taming noisy mediocrity, and showing it another side of a debatable matter; to see *both* sides of which was, for the first time, to see the Truth of it. In his Writings themselves are errors enough, crabbed prepossessions enough, yet these also of a quite extraneous and accidental nature; nowhere a wilful shutting of the eyes to the Truth. Nay, is there not everywhere a heartfelt discernment, singular, almost admirable, if we consider through what confused conflicting lights and hallucinations it had to be attained, of the highest everlasting Truth, and beginning of all Truth: this namely, that man is ever, and even in the age of Wilkes and Whitefield, a Revelation of God to man; and lives, moves and has his being in Truth only; is either true, or, in strict speech, *is* not at all?

Quite spotless, on the other hand, is Johnson's love of Truth, if we look at it as expressed in Practice, as what we have named Honesty of action. 'Clear your mind of Cant;' *clear* it, throw Cant utterly away: such was his emphatic, repeated precept; and did not he himself faithfully conform to it? The Life of this man has been, as it were, turned inside out, and examined with microscopes by friend and foe; yet was there no Lie found in him. His Doings and Writing are not *shows* but *performances:* you may weigh them in the balance, and they will stand weight. Not a line, not a sentence is dishonestly done, is other than it pretends to be. Alas! and he wrote not out of inward inspiration, but to earn his wages: and with that grand perennial tide of 'popular delusion' flowing by; in whose waters he nevertheless refused to fish, to whose rich oyster-beds the dive was too muddy for him. Observe, again, with what innate hatred of Cant, he takes for himself, and offers to others, the lowest possible view of his business, which he followed with such nobleness. Motive for writing he had none, as he often said, but money; and yet he wrote *so.* Into the region of Poetic Art he indeed never rose; there was no *ideal* without him avowing itself in his work: the nobler was that unavowed *ideal* which lay within him, and commanded saying, Work out thy Artisanship in the spirit of an Artist! They who talk loudest

about the dignity of Art, and fancy that they too are Artistic guild-brethren, and of the Celestials,—let them consider well what manner of man this was, who felt himself to be only a hired day-labourer. A labourer that was worthy of his hire; that has laboured not as an eye-servant, but as one found faithful! Neither was Johnson in those days perhaps wholly a unique. Time was when, for money, you might have ware: and needed not, in all departments, in that of the Epic Poem, in that of the Blacking-bottle, to rest content with the mere *persuasion* that you had ware. It was a happier time. But as yet the seventh Apocalyptic Bladder (of PUFFERY) had not been rent open,—to whirl and grind, as in a West-Indian Tornado, all earthly trades and things into wreck, and dust, and consummation,—and regeneration. Be it quickly, since it must be!—

That Mercy can dwell only with Valour, is an old sentiment or proposition; which, in Johnson, again receives confirmation. Few men on record have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature than old Samuel. He was called the Bear; and did indeed too often look, and roar, like one; being forced to it in his own defence: yet within that shaggy exterior of his there beat a heart warm as a mother's, soft as a little child's. Nay generally, his very roaring was but the anger of affection: the rage of a Bear, if you will; but of a Bear bereaved of her whelps. Touch his religion, glance at the Church of England, or the Divine Right; and he was upon you! These things were his Symbols of all that was good and precious for men; his very Ark of the Covenant: whoso laid hand on them tore asunder his heart of hearts. Not out of hatred to the opponent, but of love to the thing opposed, did Johnson grow cruel, fiercely contradictory: this is an important distinction; never to be forgotten in our censure of his conversational outrages. But observe also with what humanity, what openness of love, he can attach himself to all things: to a blind old woman, to a Doctor Levett, to a Cat 'Hodge.' 'His thoughts in the latter part of his life were frequently employed on his deceased friends; he often muttered these or such like sentences: "Poor man! and then he died."'

How he patiently converts his poor home into a Lazaretto; endures, for long years, the contradiction of the miserable and unreasonable; with him unconnected, save that they had no other to yield them refuge! Generous old man! Worldly possession he has little; yet of this he gives freely; from his own hard-earned shilling, the half-pence for the poor, that 'waited his coming out,' are not withheld: the poor 'waited the coming out' of one not quite so poor! A Sterne can write sentimentalities on Dead Asses: Johnson has a rough voice; but he finds the wretched Daughter of Vice fallen down in the streets; carries her home on his own shoulders, and like a good Samaritan gives help to the help-needing, worthy or unworthy. Ought not Charity, even in that sense, to cover a multitude of sins? No Penny-a-week Committee-Lady, no manager of Soup-Kitchens, dancer at Charity-Balls, was this rugged, stern-visaged man: but where, in all England, could there have been found another soul so full of Pity, a hand so heavenlike bounteous as his? The widow's mite, we know, was greater than all the other gifts.

Perhaps it is this divine feeling of Affection, throughout manifested, that principally attracts us towards Johnson. A true brother of men is he; and filial lover of the Earth; who, with little bright spots of Attachment, 'where lives and works some loved one,' has beautified 'this rough solitary Earth into a peopled garden.' Lichfield, with its mostly dull and limited inhabitants, is to the last one of the sunny islets for him: *Salve magna parens!* Or read those Letters on his Mother's death: what a genuine solemn grief and pity lies recorded there; a looking back into the Past, unspeakably mournful, unspeakably tender. And yet calm, sublime; for he must now act, not look: his venerated Mother has been taken from him; but he must now write a *Rasselas* to defray her funeral! Again in this little incident, recorded in his Book of Devotion, are not the tones of sacred Sorrow and Greatness deeper than in many a blank-verse Tragedy;—as, indeed, 'the fifth act of a Tragedy,' though unrhymed, does 'lie in every death-bed, were it a peasant's, and of straw:'

'Sunday, October 18, 1767. Yesterday, at about ten in the morning, I took my leave forever of my dear old friend, Catherine Chambers, who came to live with my mother about 1724, and has been but little parted from us since. She buried my father, my brother and my mother. She is now fifty-eight years old.

'I desired all to withdraw; then told her that we were to part forever; that as Christians, we should part with prayer; and that I would, if she was willing, say a short prayer beside her. She expressed great desire to hear me; and held up her poor hands as she lay in bed, with great fervour, while I prayed kneeling by her. * *

'I then kissed her. She told me that to part was the greatest pain she had ever felt, and that she hoped we should meet again in a better place. I expressed, with swelled eyes and great emotion of tenderness, the same hopes. We kissed and parted; I humbly hope, to meet again, and to part no more.'

Tears trickling down the granite rock: a soft well of Pity springs within!—Still more tragical is this other scene: 'Johnson mentioned that he could not in general accuse himself of having been an undutiful son. "Once, indeed," said he, "I was disobedient: I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault." '—But by what method?—What method was now possible? Hear it; the words are again given as his own, though here evidently by a less capable reporter:

'Madam, I beg your pardon for the abruptness of my departure in the morning, but I was compelled to it by conscience. Fifty years ago, Madam, on this day, I committed a breach of filial piety. My father had been in the habit of attending Uttoxeter market, and opening a stall there for the sale of his Books. Confined by indisposition, he desired me, that day, to go and attend the stall in his place. My pride prevented me; I gave my father a refusal.—And now to-day I have been at Uttoxeter; I went into the market, at the time of business, uncovered my head, and stood with it bare, for an hour, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory.'

Who does not figure to himself this spectacle, amid the 'rainy weather, and the sneers,' or wonder, 'of the bystanders?' The memory of old Michael Johnson, rising from the far distance; sad-beckoning in the 'moonlight of memory:' how he had toiled faithfully hither and thither; patiently among the lowest of the low; been buffeted and beaten down, yet ever risen again, ever tried it anew—And oh! when the wearied old man, as Bookseller, or Hawker, or Tinker, or whatsoever it was that Fate had reduced him to, begged help of *thee* for one day,—how savage, diabolic, was that mean Vanity, which answered, No! He sleeps now; after life's fitful fever, he sleeps: but thou, O Merciless, how now wilt thou still the sting of that remembrance?—The picture of Samuel Johnson standing bareheaded in the market there, is one of the grandest and saddest we can paint. Repentance! Repentance! he proclaims, as with passionate sobs: but only to the ear of Heaven, if Heaven will give him audience: the earthly ear and heart, that should have heard it, are now closed, unresponsive forever.

That this so keen-loving, soft-trembling Affectionateness, the inmost essence of his being, must have looked forth, in one form or another, through Johnson's whole character, practical and intellectual, modifying both, is not to be doubted. Yet through what singular distortions and superstitions, moping melancholies, blind habits, whims about 'entering with the right foot,' and 'touching every post as he walked along;' and all the other mad chaotic lumber of a brain that, with sun-clear intellect, hovered forever on the verge of insanity,—must that same inmost essence have looked forth; unrecognisable to all but the most observant! Accordingly it was not recognised; Johnson passed not for a fine nature, but for a dull, almost brutal one. Might not, for example, the first-fruit of such a Lovingness, coupled with his quick Insight, have been expected to be a peculiarly courteous demeanour as man among men? In Johnson's 'Politeness,' which he often, to the wonder of some, asserted to be great, there was indeed somewhat that needed explanation. Nevertheless, if he insisted always on handing lady-visitors to their carriage;

though with the certainty of collecting a mob of gazers in Fleet Street,—as might well be, the beau having on, by way of court-dress, 'his rusty brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes for slippers, a little shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose :'—in all this we can see the spirit of true Politeness, only shining through a strange medium. Thus again, in his apartments, at one time, there were unfortunately no chairs. 'A gentleman who frequently visited him whilst writing his *Idlers*, constantly found him at his desk, sitting on one with three legs ; and on rising from it, he remarked that Johnson never forgot its defect ; but would either hold it in his hand, or place it with great composure against some support ; taking no notice of its imperfection to his visitor,'—who meanwhile, we suppose, sat upon folios, or in the sartorial fashion. 'It was remarkable in Johnson,' continues Miss Reynolds (*Renny dear*), 'that no external circumstances ever prompted him to make any apology, or to seem even sensible of their existence. Whether this was the effect of philosophic pride, or of some partial notion of his respecting high-breeding, is doubtful.' That it *was*, for one thing, the effect of genuine Politeness, is nowise doubtful. Not of the Pharisaical Brummellean Politeness, which would suffer crucifixion rather than ask twice for soup : but the noble universal Politeness of a man, that knows the dignity of men, and feels his own ; such as may be seen in the patriarchal bearing of an Indian Sachem ; such as Johnson himself exhibited, when a sudden chance brought him into dialogue with his King. To us, with our view of the man, it nowise appears 'strange' that he should have boasted himself cunning in the laws of Politeness ; nor 'stranger still,' habitually attentive to practice them.

More legibly is this influence of the Loving heart to be traced in his intellectual character. What, indeed, is the beginning of intellect, the first inducement to the exercise thereof, but attraction towards somewhat, *affection* for it? Thus too, who ever saw, or will see, any true talent, not to speak of genius, the foundation of which is not goodness,

love? From Johnson's strength of Affection, we deduce many of his intellectual peculiarities; especially that threatening array of perversions, known under the name of 'Johnson's Prejudices.' Looking well into the root from which these sprang, we have long ceased to view them with hostility, can pardon and reverently pity them. Consider with what force early-imbibed opinions must have clung to a soul of this Affection. Those evil-famed Prejudices of his, that Jacobitism, Church-of-Englandism, hatred of the Scotch, belief in Witches, and such like, what were they but the ordinary beliefs of well-doing, well-meaning provincial Englishmen in that day? First gathered by his Father's hearth; round the kind 'country fires' of native Staffordshire; they grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength: they were hallowed by fondest sacred recollections; to part with them was parting with his heart's blood. If the man who has no strength of Affection, strength of Belief, have no strength of Prejudice, let him thank Heaven for it, but to himself take small thanks.

Melancholy it was, indeed, that the noble Johnson could not work himself loose from these adhesions; that he could only purify them, and wear them with some nobleness. Yet let us understand how they grew out from the very centre of his being: nay moreover, how they came to cohere in him with what formed the business and worth of his Life, the sum of his whole Spiritual Endeavour. For it is on the same ground that he became throughout an Edifier and Repairer, not, as the others of his make were, a Puller-down; that in an age of universal Scepticism, England was still to produce its Believer. Mark too his candour even here; while a Dr. Adams, with placid surprise, asks, "Have we not evidence enough of the soul's immortality?" Johnson answers, "I wish for more." But the truth is, in Prejudice, as in all things, Johnson was the product of England; one of those *good* yeomen whose limbs were made in England: alas, the last of *such* Invincibles, their day being now done! His culture is wholly English; that not of a Thinker, but of a 'Scholar:' his interests are wholly English; he sees and knows nothing but England; he is the John Bull of Spiritual

Europe : let him live, love him, as he was and could not but be! Pitiable it is, no doubt, that a Samuel Johnson must confute Hume's irreligious Philosophy by some 'story from a Clergyman of the Bishoprick of Durham;' should see nothing in the great Frederick but 'Voltaire's lackey;' in Voltaire himself but a man *acerrimi ingenii, paucarum literarum;* in Rousseau but one worthy to be hanged ; and in the universal, long-prepared, inevitable Tendency of European Thought but a green-sick milkmaid's crotchet of, for variety's sake, 'milking the Bull.' Our good, dear John! Observe too what it is that he sees in the city of Paris : no feeblest glimpse of those D'Alemberts and Diderots, or of the strange questionable work they did ; solely some Benedictine Priests, to talk kitchen-latin with them about *Editiones Principes.* "*Monsheer Nongtongpaw!*"—Our dear, foolish John : yet is there a lion's heart within him!—Pitiable all these things were, we say ; yet nowise inexcusable ; nay, as basis or as foil to much else that was in Johnson, almost venerable. Ought we not, indeed, to honour England, and English Institutions and Way of Life, that they could still equip such a man ; could furnish him in heart and head to be a Samuel Johnson, and yet to love them, and unyieldingly fight for them? What truth and living vigour must such Institutions once have had, when, in the middle of the Eighteenth Century, there was still enough left in them for this!

It is worthy of note that, in our little British Isle, the two grand Antagonisms of Europe should have stood embodied, under their very highest concentration, in two men produced simultaneously among ourselves. Samuel Johnson and David Hume, as was observed, were children nearly of the same year : through life they were spectators of the same Life-movement ; often inhabitants of the same city. Greater contrast, in all things, between two great men, could not be. Hume, well-born, competently provided for, whole in body and mind, of his own determination forces a way into Literature : Johnson, poor, moonstruck, diseased, forlorn, is forced into it 'with the bayonet of necessity at his back.' And what a part did they severally play there! As Johnson became the

father of all succeeding Tories: so was Hume the father of all succeeding Whigs, for his own Jacobitism was but an accident, as worthy to be named Prejudice as any of Johnson's. Again, if Johnson's culture was exclusively English; Hume's, in Scotland, became European;—for which reason too we find his influence spread deeply over all quarters of Europe, traceable deeply in all speculation, French, German, as well as domestic; while Johnson's name, out of England, is hardly anywhere to be met with. In spiritual stature they are almost equal; both great, among the greatest: yet how unlike in likeness! Hume has the widest, methodising, comprehensive eye; Johnson the keenest for perspicacity and minute detail: so had, perhaps chiefly, their education ordered it. Neither of the two rose into Poetry; yet both to some approximation thereof: Hume to something of an Epic clearness and method, as in his delineation of the Commonwealth Wars; Johnson to many a deep Lyric tone of plaintiveness and impetuous graceful power, scattered over his fugitive compositions. Both, rather to the general surprise, had a certain rugged Humour shining through their earnestness: the indication, indeed, that they *were* earnest men, and had *subdued* their wild world into a kind of temporary home and safe dwelling. Both were, by principle and habit, Stoics: yet Johnson with the greater merit, for he alone had very much to triumph over; farther, he alone ennobled his Stoicism into Devotion. To Johnson Life was as a Prison, to be endured with heroic faith: to Hume it was little more than a foolish Bartholomew-Fair-Show-booth, with the foolish crowdings and elbowings of which it was not worth while to quarrel; the whole would break up, and be at liberty, so *soon*. Both realised the highest task of Manhood, that of living like men; each died not unfitly, in his way: Hume as one, with factitious, half-false gaiety, taking leave of what was itself wholly but a Lie: Johnson as one, with awe-struck, yet resolute and piously expectant heart, taking leave of a Reality, to enter a Reality still higher. Johnson had the harder problem of it, from first to last: whether, with some hesitation, we can admit that he was intrinsically the better-gifted, may remain undecided.

These two men now rest; the one in Westminster Abbey here; the other in the Calton-Hill Churchyard of Edinburgh. Through Life they did not meet: as contrasts, 'like in unlike,' love each other; so might they two have loved, and communed kindly,—had not the terrestrial dross and darkness, that was in them, withstood! One day, their spirits, what Truth was in each, will be found working, living in harmony and free union, even here below. They were the two half-men of their time: whoso should combine the intrepid Candour and decisive scientific Clearness of Hume, with the Reverence, the Love and devout Humility of Johnson, were the whole man of a new time. Till such whole man arrive for us, and the distracted time admit of such, might the Heavens but bless poor England with half-men worthy to tie the shoe-latchets of these, resembling these even from afar! Be both attentively regarded, let the true Effort of both prosper;—and for the present, both take our affectionate farewell!

DEATH OF GOETHE.

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DEATH OF GOETHE.

Goethe died at Weimar, 22d March 1832: His last words, a greeting of the new-awakened Earth; his last movement, to work at his appointed task. A death full of greatness and sacredness: If his course was like the Sun's, so also was his going down. In the death of a good man, Eternity seen looking through Time. (151).—A New Era began with Goethe, the ulterior tendencies of which are yet unmanifested. The real Force which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. Honour to him who first 'through the impassable paves a road.' Goethe's Works. To how many hearers, languishing, nigh dead, in the airless dungeons of Unbelief, has the assurance of such a man come like tidings of deliverance! The unwearied Workman now rests from his labours; while the fruit of them is growing, and to grow. (151).

DEATH OF GOETHE.

[1832.]

In the Obituary of these days stands one article of quite peculiar import; the time, the place and particulars of which will have to be often repeated and re-written, and continue in remembrance many centuries: this, namely, that Johann Wolfgang von Goethe died at Weimar, on the 22d March 1832. It was about eleven in the morning; 'he expired,' says the record, 'without any apparent suffering, having, a few minutes previously, called for paper for the purpose of writing, and expressed his delight at the arrival of spring.' A beautiful death; like that of a soldier found faithful at his post, and in the cold hand his arms still grasped! The Poet's last words are a greeting of the new-awakened Earth; his last movement is to work at his appointed task. Beautiful; what we might call a Classic sacred-death; if it were not rather an Elijah translation,—in a chariot, not of fire and terror, but of hope and soft vernal sunbeams! It was at Frankfort on the Main, on the 28th of August 1749, that this man entered the world: and now, gently welcoming the birthday of his eighty-second spring, he closes his eyes, and takes farewell.

So then our Greatest has departed. That melody of life, with its cunning tones, which took captive ear and heart, has gone silent; the heavenly force that dwelt here victorious over so much, is here no longer; thus far, not farther, by speech and by act, shall the wise man utter himself forth.

[1] New Monthly Magazine, No. 138.

The End! What solemn meaning lies in that sound, as it peals mournfully through the soul, when a living friend has passed away! All now is closed, irrevocable; the changeful life-picture, growing daily into new coherence, under new touches and hues, has suddenly become completed and unchangeable; there as it lay, it is dipped, from this moment, in the æther of the heavens, and shines transfigured, to endure even so—forever. Time and Time's Empire; stern, wide-devouring, yet not without their grandeur! The week-day man, who was one of us, has put on the garment of Eternity, and become radiant and triumphant; the Present is all at once the Past; Hope is suddenly cut away, and only the backward vistas of Memory remain, shone on by a light that proceeds not from this earthly sun.

The death of Goethe, even for the many hearts that personally loved him, is not a thing to be lamented over; is to be viewed, in his own spirit, as a thing full of greatness and sacredness. For all men it is appointed once to die. To this man the full measure of a man's life had been granted, and a course and task such as to only a few in the whole generations of the world: what else could we hope or require but that now he should be called hence and have leave to depart, having finished the work that was given him to do? If his course, as we may say of him more justly than of any other, was like the Sun's, so also was his going down. For indeed, as the material Sun is the eye and revealer of all things, so is Poetry, so is the World-Poet in a spiritual sense. Goethe's life too, if we examine it, is well represented in that emblem of a solar Day. Beautifully rose our summer sun, gorgeous in the red fervid east, scattering the spectres and sickly damps (of both of which there were enough to scatter); strong, benignant in his noonday clearness, walking triumphant through the upper realms; and now, mark also how he sets! '*So stirbt ein Held; anbetungsvoll*, So dies a hero to be worshipped!'

And yet, when the inanimate, material sun has sunk and disappeared, it will happen that we stand to gaze into the still glowing west; and there rise great pale motionless clouds, like coulisses or curtains, to close the flame-theatre within;

and then in that death-pause of the Day, an unspeakable feeling will come over us: it is as if the poor sounds of Time, those hammerings of tired Labour on his anvils, those voices of simple men, had become awful and supernatural; as if in listening, we could hear them 'mingle with the ever-pealing tone of old Eternity.' In such moments the secrets of Life lie opener to us; mysterious things flit over the soul; Life itself seems holier, wonderful and fearful. How much more when our sunset was of a living sun; and *its* bright countenance and shining return to us, not on the morrow, but 'no more again, at all, forever!' In such a scene, silence, as over the mysterious great, is for him that has some feeling thereof the fittest mood. Nevertheless by silence the distant is not brought into communion; the feeling of each is without response from the bosom of his brother. There are now, what some years ago there were not, English hearts that know something of what those three words, 'Death of Goethe,' mean; to such men, among their many thoughts on the event, which are not to be translated into speech, may these few, through that imperfect medium, prove acceptable.

'Death,' says the Philosopher, 'is a commingling of Eternity with Time; in the death of a good man, Eternity is seen looking through Time.' With such a sublimity here offered to eye and heart, it is not unnatural to look with new earnestness before and behind, and ask, What space in those years and æons of computed Time, this man with his activity may influence; what relation to the world of change and mortality, which the earthly name Life, he who is even now called to the Immortals has borne and may bear.

Goethe, it is commonly said, made a New Era in Literature; a Poetic Era began with him, the end or ulterior tendencies of which are yet nowise generally visible. This common saying is a true one; and true with a far deeper meaning than, to the most, it conveys. Were the Poet but a sweet sound and singer, solacing the ear of the idle with pleasant songs; and the new Poet one who could sing his idle pleasant song to a new air,—we should account him a small matter, and his performance small. But this man, it is not unknown

to many, was a Poet in such a sense as the late generations have witnessed no other; as it is, in this generation, a kind of distinction to believe in the existence of, in the possibility of. The true Poet is ever, as of old, the Seer; whose eye has been gifted to discern the godlike Mystery of God's Universe, and decipher some new lines of its celestial writing; we can still call him a *Vates* and Seer; for he *sees* into this greatest of secrets, 'the open secret;' hidden things become clear; how the Future (both resting on Eternity) is but another phasis of the Present: thereby are his words in very truth prophetic; what he has spoken shall be done.

It begins now to be everywhere surmised that the real Force, which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. The Thought is parent of the Deed, nay is living soul of it, and last and continual, as well as first mover of it; is the foundation and beginning and essence, therefore, of man's whole existence here below. In this sense, it has been said, the Word of man (the uttered Thought of man) is still a magic formula, whereby he rules the world. Do not the winds and waters, and all tumultuous powers, inanimate and animate, obey him? A poor, quite mechanical Magician speaks; and fire-winged ships cross the Ocean at his bidding. Or mark, above all, that 'raging of the nations,' wholly in contention, desperation and dark chaotic fury; how the meek voice of a Hebrew Martyr and Redeemer stills it into order, and a savage Earth becomes kind and beautiful, and the habitation of horrid cruelty a temple of peace. The true Sovereign of the world, who moulds the world, like soft wax, according to his pleasure, is he who lovingly *sees* into the world; the 'inspired Thinker' whom in these days we name Poet. The true Sovereign is the Wise Man.

However, as the Moon, which can heave up the Atlantic, sends not in her obedient billows at once, but gradually; and the Tide, which swells to-day on our shores, and washes every creek, rose in the bosom of the great Ocean (astronomers assure us) eight-and-forty hours ago; and, indeed, all world-movements, by nature deep, are by nature calm, and flow and

swell onwards with a certain majestic slowness: so too with the Impulse of a Great Man, and the effect he has to manifest on other men. To such a one we may grant some generation or two, before the celestial Impulse he impressed on the world will universally proclaim itself, and become (like the working of the Moon) if still not intelligible, yet palpable, to all men; some generation or two more, wherein it has to grow, and expand, and envelop all things, before it can reach its acme; and thereafter mingling with other movements and new impulses, at length cease to require a specific observation or designation. Longer or shorter such period may be, according to the nature of the Impulse itself, and of the elements it works in; according, above all, as the Impulse was intrinsically great and deep-reaching, or only wide-spread, superficial and transient. Thus, if David Hume is at this hour pontiff of the world, and rules most hearts, and guides most tongues (the hearts and tongues even of those that in vain rebel against him), there are, nevertheless, symptoms that his task draws towards completion; and now in the distance his successor becomes visible. On the other hand, we have seen a Napoleon, like some gunpowder force (with which sort, indeed, he chiefly worked), explode his whole virtue suddenly, and thunder himself out and silent, in a space of five-and-twenty years. While again, for a man of true greatness, working with spiritual implements, two centuries is no uncommon period; nay, on this Earth of ours, there have been men whose Impulse had not completed its development till after fifteen hundred years, and might perhaps be seen still individually subsistent after two thousand.

But, as was once written, 'though our clock strikes when there is a change from hour to hour, no hammer in the Horologe of Time peals through the Universe to proclaim that there is a change from era to era.' The true Beginning is oftenest unnoticed and unnoticeable. Thus do men go wrong in their reckoning; and grope hither and thither, not knowing where they are, in what course their history runs. Within this last century, for instance, with its wild doings and destroyings, what hope, grounded on miscalculation, ending

in disappointment! How many world-famous victories were gained and lost, dynasties founded and subverted, revolutions accomplished, constitutions sworn to; and ever the 'new era' was come, was coming, yet still it came not, but the time continued sick! Alas, all these were but spasmodic convulsions of the death-sick time: the crisis of cure and regeneration to the time was not there indicated. The real new era was when a Wise Man came into the world, with clearness of vision and greatness of soul to accomplish this old high enterprise, amid these new difficulties, yet again: A Life of Wisdom. Such a man became, by Heaven's preappointment, in very deed the Redeemer of the time. Did he not bear the curse of the time? He was filled full with its scepticism, bitterness, hollowness and thousandfold contradictions, till his heart was like to break; but he subdued all this, rose victorious over this, and manifoldly by word and act showed others that come after, how to do the like. Honour to him who first 'through the impassable paves a road!' Such, indeed, is the task of every great man; nay of every good man in one or the other sphere, since goodness is greatness, and the good man, high or humble, is ever a martyr and 'spiritual hero that ventures forward into the gulf for our deliverance.' The gulf into which this man ventured, which he tamed and rendered habitable, was the greatest and most perilous of all, wherein truly all others lie included: *The whole distracted Existence of man is an age of Unbelief.* Whoso lives, whoso with earnest mind studies to live wisely in that mad element, may yet know, perhaps too well, what an enterprise was here; and for the Chosen Man of our time who could prevail in it, have the higher reverence, and a gratitude such as belongs to no other.

How far he prevailed in it, and by what means, with what endurances and achievements, will in due season be estimated. Those volumes called *Goethe's Works* will now receive no farther addition or alteration; and the record of his whole spiritual Endeavour lies written there,—were the man or men but ready that could read it rightly! A glorious record; wherein he who would understand himself and his environment, who

struggles for escape out of darkness into light as for the one thing needful, will long thankfully study. For the whole chaotic Time, what it has suffered, attained and striven after stands imaged there; interpreted, ennobled into poetic clearness. From the passionate longings and wailings of *Werter*, spoken as from the heart of all Europe; onwards through the wild unearthly melody of *Faust*, like the spirit-song of falling worlds; to that serenely smiling wisdom of *Meisters Lehrjahre*, and the *German Hafiz*,—what an interval; and all enfolded in an ethereal music, as from unknown spheres, harmoniously uniting all! A long interval; and wide as well as long; for this was a universal man. History, Science, Art, human Activity, under every aspect; the laws of Light in his *Farbenlehre;* the laws of wild Italian Life in his *Benvenuto Cellini;*—nothing escaped him; nothing that he did not look into, that he did not see into. Consider too the genuineness of whatsoever he did; his hearty, idiomatic way; simplicity with loftiness, and nobleness and aërial grace! Pure works of Art, completed with an antique Grecian polish, as *Torquato Tasso*, as *Iphigenie;* Proverbs; *Xenien;* Patriarchial Sayings, which, since the Hebrew Scriptures were closed, we know not where to match; in whose homely depths lie often the materials for volumes.

To measure and estimate all this, as we said, the time is not come; a century hence will be the fitter time. He who investigates it best will find its meaning greatest, and be the readiest to acknowledge that it transcends him. Let the reader have *seen*, before he attempts to *oversee*. A poor reader, in the mean while, were he who discerned not here the authentic rudiments of that same New Era, whereof we have so often had false warning. Wondrously, the wrecks and pulverised rubbish of ancient things, institutions, religions, forgotten noblenesses, made alive again by the breath of Genius, lie here in new coherence and incipient union, the spirit of Art working creative through the mass; that *chaos*, into which the eighteenth century with its wild war of hypocrites and sceptics had reduced the Past, begins here to be once more a *world*.—This, the highest that can be said of written Books, is to be said of these: there is in them a New

Time, the prophecy and beginning of a New Time. The corner-stone of a new social edifice for mankind is laid there; firmly, as before, on the natural rock: far-extending traces of a ground-plan we can also see; which future centuries may go on to enlarge, to amend and work into reality. These sayings seem strange to some; nevertheless they are not empty exaggerations, but expressions, in their way of a belief, which is not now of yesterday; perhaps when Goethe has been read and meditated for another generation, they will not seem so strange.

Precious is the new light of Knowledge which our Teacher conquers for us; yet small to the new light of Love which also we derive from him: the most important element of any man's performance is the Life he has accomplished. Under the intellectual union of man and man, which works by precept, lies a holier union of affection, working by example: the influences of which latter, mystic, deep-reaching, all-embracing, can still less be computed. For Love is ever the beginning of Knowledge, as fire is of light; and works also more in the manner of *fire*. That Goethe was a great Teacher of men means already that he was a good man: that he had himself learned; in the school of experience had striven and proved victorious. To how many hearers, languishing, nigh dead, in the airless dungeon of Unbelief (a true vacuum and nonentity), has the assurance that there was such a man, that such a man was still possible, come like tidings of great joy! He who would learn to reconcile reverence with clearness; to deny and defy what is False, yet believe and worship what is True; amid raging factions, bent on what is either altogether empty or has substance in it only for a day, which stormfully convulse and tear hither and thither a distracted expiring system of society, to adjust himself aright; and, working for the world and in the world, keep himself unspotted from the world,—let him look here. This man, we may say, became morally great, by being in his own age, what in some other ages many might have been, a genuine man. His grand excellency was this, that he was genuine. As his primary faculty, the foundation of all others, was Intellect, depth and

force of Vision; so his primary virtue was Justice, was the courage to be just. A giant's strength we admired in him; yet, strength ennobled into softest mildness; even like that 'silent rock-bound strength of a world,' on whose bosom, which rests on the adamant, grow flowers. The greatest of hearts was also the bravest; fearless, unwearied, peacefully invincible. A completed man: the trembling sensibility, the wild enthusiasm of a Mignon can assort with the scornful world-mockery of a Mephistopheles; and each side of many-sided life receives its due from him.

Goethe reckoned Schiller happy that he died young, in the full vigour of his days; that we could 'figure him as a youth forever.' To himself a different, higher destiny was appointed. Through all the changes of man's life, onwards to its extreme verge he was to go; and through them all nobly. In youth, flatterings of fortune, uninterrupted outward prosperity cannot corrupt him; a wise observer has to remark: 'None but a Goethe, at the Sun of earthly happiness, can keep his Phœnix-wings unsinged.'—Through manhood, in the most complex relation, as poet, courtier, politician, man of business, man of speculation; in the middle of revolutions and counter-revolutions, outward and spiritual; with the world loudly for him, with the world loudly or silently against him; in all seasons and situations, he holds equally on his way. Old age itself, which is called dark and feeble, he was to render lovely: who that looked upon him there, venerable in himself, and in the world's reverence ever the clearer, the purer, but could have prayed that he too were such an old man? And did not the kind Heavens continue kind, and grant to a career so glorious the worthiest end?

Such was Goethe's Life; such has his departure been. He sleeps now beside his Schiller and his Carl August of Weimar: so had the Prince willed it, that between these two should be his own final rest. In life they were united, in death they are not divided. The unwearied Workman now rests from his labours; the fruit of these is left growing, and to grow. His earthly years have been numbered and ended: but of his Activity, for it stood rooted in the Eternal, there is

no end. All that we mean by the higher Literature of Germany, which is the higher Literature of Europe, already gathers round this man, as its creator; of which grand object, dawning mysterious on a world that hoped not for it, who is there that can measure the significance and far-reaching influences? The Literature of Europe will pass away; Europe itself, the Earth itself will pass away: this little lifeboat of an Earth, with its noisy crew of a Mankind, and all their troubled History, will one day have vanished; faded like a cloud-speck from the azure of the All! What then is man! What then is man! He endures but for an hour and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains not to this wild death-element of Time; that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be, when Time shall be no more.

And now we turn back into the world, withdrawing from this new-made grave. The man whom we love lies there: but glorious, worthy; and his spirit yet lives in us with an authentic life. Could each here vow to do his little task, even as the Departed did his great one; in the manner of a true man, not for a Day, but for Eternity! To live, as he counselled and commanded, not commodiously in the Reputable, the Plausible, the Half, but resolutely in the Whole, the Good, the True:

'*Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren resolut zu leben!*'

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

ESSAYS

COLLECTED AND REPUBLISHED

BY

THOMAS CARLYLE

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GOETHE'S WORKS.

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GOETHE'S WORKS.

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GOETHE'S WORKS.[1]

[1832.]

It is now four years since we specially invited attention to this Book; first in an essay on the graceful little fantasy-piece of *Helena*, then in a more general one on the merits and workings of Goethe himself: since which time two important things have happened in reference to it; for the publication, advancing with successful regularity, reached its fortieth and last volume in 1830; and now, still more emphatically to conclude both this 'completed, final edition,' and all other editions, endeavours and attainments of one in whose hands lay so much, come tidings that the venerable man has been recalled from our earth, and of his long labours and high faithful stewardship we have had what was appointed us.

The greatest epoch in a man's life is not always his death; yet for bystanders, such as contemporaries, it is always the most noticeable. All other epochs are transition-points from one visible condition to another visible; the days of their occurrence are like any other days, from which only the clearer-sighted will distinguish them; bridges they are, over which the smooth highway runs continuous, as if no Rubicon were there. But the day in a mortal's destinies which is like no other, is his death-day: here too is a transition, what we may call a bridge, as at other epochs; but now from the keystone onwards half the arch rests on invisibility; this is a transition out of visible Time into invisible Eternity.

Since Death, as the palpable revelation (not to be overlooked

[1] Foreign Quarterly Review, No. 19.—*Goethes Werke. Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand* (Goethe's Works. Completed, final Edition), 40 voll. Stuttgard and Tübingen, 1827–30.

by the dullest) of the mystery of wonder, and depth, and fear, which everywhere from beginning to ending through its whole course and movement lies under Life, is in any case so great, —we find it not unnatural that hereby a new look of greatness, a new interest should be impressed on whatsoever has preceded it and led to it; that even towards some man, whose history did not then first become significant, the world should turn, at his departure, with a quite peculiar earnestness, and now seriously ask itself a question, perhaps never seriously asked before. What the purport and character of his presence here was; now when he has gone hence, and is not present here, and will remain absent forevermore. It is the conclusion that crowns the work; much more the irreversible conclusion wherein all is concluded: thus is there no life so mean but a death will make it memorable.

At all lykewakes, accordingly, the doings and endurances of the Departed are the theme: rude souls, rude tongues grow eloquently busy with him: a whole septuagint of beldames are striving to render, in such dialect as they have, the small bible, or apocrypha, of his existence, for the general perusal. The least famous of mankind will for once become public, and have his name printed, and read not without interest: in the Newspaper Obituaries; on some frail memorial, under which he has crept to sleep. Foolish lovesick girls know that there is one method to impress the obdurate false Lovelace, and wring his bosom; the method of drowning: foolish ruined dandies, whom the tailor will no longer trust, and the world turning on its heel is about forgetting, can recall it to attention by report of pistol: and so, in a worthless death, if in a worthless life no more, reattain the topgallant of renown,—for one day. Death is ever a sublimity, and supernatural wonder, were there no other left: the last act of a most strange drama, which is not dramatic, but has now become real; wherein, miraculously, Furies, god-missioned, have in actual person risen from the abyss, and do verily dance there in that terror of all terrors, and wave their dusky-glaring torches, and shake their serpent-hair! Out of which heart-thrilling, so authentically tragic fifth-act there goes, as we said, a new

meaning over all the other four ; making them likewise tragic and authentic, and memorable in some measure, were they formerly the sorriest pickle-herring farce.

But above all, when a Great Man dies, then has the time come for putting us in mind that he was alive ; biographies and biographic sketches, criticisms, characters, anecdotes, reminiscences, issue forth as from opened springing fountains ; the world, with a passion whetted by impossibility, will yet awhile retain, yet awhile speak with, though only to the unanswering echoes, what it has lost without remedy : thus is the last event of life often the loudest ; and real spiritual *Apparitions* (who have been named Men), as false imaginary ones are fabled to do, vanish in thunder.

For ourselves, as regards the great Goethe, if not seeking to be foremost in this natural movement, neither do we shun to mingle in it. The life and ways of such men as he, are, in all seasons, a matter profitable to contemplate, to speak of : if in this death-season, long with a sad reverence looked forward to, there has little increase of light, little change of feeling arisen for the writer, a readier attention, nay a certain expectancy, from some readers is call sufficient. Innumerable meditations and disquisitions on this subject must yet pass through the minds of men ; on all sides must it be taken up, by various observers, by successive generations, and ever a new light may evolve itself : why should not this observer, on this side, set down what he partially has seen into ; and the necessary process thereby be forwarded, at any rate continued ?

A continental Humorist, of deep-piercing, resolute, though strangely perverse faculty, whose works are as yet but sparingly if at all cited in English literature, has written a chapter, somewhat in the nondescript manner of metaphysico-rhetorical, homiletic-exegetic rhapsody, on the *Greatness of Great Men ;* which topic we agree with him in reckoning one of the most pregnant. The time, indeed, is come when much that was once found visibly subsistent Without must anew be sought for Within ; many a human feeling, indestructible and to man's well-being indispensable, which once manifested itself in expressive forms to the Sense, now lies hidden in the

formless depths of the Spirit, or at best struggles out obscurely in forms become superannuated, altogether inexpressive and unrecognizable ; from which paralyzed imprisoned state often the best effort of the thinker is required, and moreover were well applied, to deliver it. For if the Present is to be the 'living sum-total of the whole Past,' nothing that ever lived in the Past must be let wholly die ; whatsoever was done, whatsoever was said or written aforetime, was done and written for our edification. In such state of imprisonment, paralysis and unrecognizable defacement, as compared with its condition in the old ages, lies this our feeling towards great men ; wherein, and in the much else that belongs to it, some of the deepest human interests will be found involved. A few words from Herr Professor Teufelsdröckh, if they help to set this preliminary matter in a clearer light, may be worth translating here. Let us first remark with him, however, 'how wonderful in all cases, great or little, is the importance of man to man :'

'Deny it as he will,' says Teufelsdröckh, 'man reverently loves man, and daily by action evidences his belief in the divineness of man. What a more than regal mystery encircles the poorest of living souls for us ! The highest is not independent of him ; his suffrage has value : could the highest monarch convince himself that the humblest beggar with sincere mind despised him, no serried ranks of halberdiers and bodyguards could shut out some little twinge of pain ; some emanation from the low had pierced into the bosom of the high. Of a truth, men are mystically united ; a mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one.

'Thus too has that fierce false hunting after Popularity, which you often wonder at, and laugh at, a basis on something true : nay, under the other aspect, what is that wonderful spirit of Interference, were it but manifested as the paltriest scandal and tea-table backbiting, other than inversely or directly, a heartfelt indestructible sympathy of man with man ? Hatred itself is but an inverse love. The philosopher's wife complained to the philosopher that certain two-legged animals without feathers spake evil of him, spitefully criticised his goings out and comings in ; wherein she too failed not of

her share: "Light of my life," answered the philosopher, "it is their love of us, unknown to themselves, and taking a foolish shape; thank them for it, and do thou love them more wisely. Were we mere steam-engines working here under this roof-tree, they would scorn to speak of us once in a twelvemonth." The last stage of human perversion, it has been said, is when sympathy corrupts itself into envy; and the indestructible interest we take in men's doings has become a joy over their faults and misfortunes: this is the last and lowest stage; lower than this we cannot go: the absolute petrifaction of indifference is not attainable on this side total death.

'And now,' continues the Professor, 'rising from these lowest tea-table regions of human communion into the higher and highest, is there not still in the world's demeanour towards Great Men, enough to make the old practice of *Hero-worship* intelligible, nay significant? Simpleton! I tell thee Hero-worship still continues; it is the only creed which never and nowhere grows or can grow obsolete. For always and everywhere this remains a true saying: *Il y a dans le cœur humain une fibre religieuse.* Man always *worships* something; always he sees the Infinite shadowed forth in something finite; and indeed can and must so see it in *any* finite thing, once tempt him well to *fix* his eyes thereon. Yes, in practice, be it in theory or not, we are all Supernaturalists; and have an infinite happiness or an infinite woe not only waiting us hereafter, but looking out on us through any pitifullest present good or evil;—as, for example, on a high poetic Byron through his lameness; as on all young souls through their first lovesuit; as on older souls, still more foolishly, through many a lawsuit, paper-battle, political horse-race or ass-race. Atheism, it has been said, is impossible; and truly, if we will consider it, no Atheist denies a Divinity, but only some NAME (*Nomen, Numen*) of a Divinity: the God is still present there, working in that benighted heart, were it only as a god of darkness. Thousands of stern Sansculottes, to seek no other instance, go chaunting martyr-hymns to their guillotine: these spurn at the name of a God; yet worship one (as hapless "Proselytes without the Gate,") under the new pseudonym of

Freedom. What indeed is all this that is called political fanaticism, revolutionary madness, force of hatred, force of love and so forth, but merely, under new designations, that same wondrous, wonder-working reflex from the Infinite, which in all times has given the Finite its empyrean or tartarean hue, thereby its blessedness or cursedness, its marketable worth or unworth?

'Remark, however, as illustrative of several things, and more to the purpose here, that man does in strict speech always remain the clearest symbol of the Divinity to man. Friend Novalis, the devoutest heart I knew, and of purest depth, has not scrupled to call man, what the Divine Man is called in Scripture, a "Revelation in the Flesh." "There is but one temple in the world," says he, "and that is the body of man. Bending before men is a reverence done to this revelation in the flesh. We touch heaven when we lay our hand on a human body." In which notable words, a reader that meditates them may find such meaning and scientific accuracy as will surprise him.

'The ages of superstition, it appears to be sufficiently known, are behind us. To no man, were he never so heroic, are shrines any more built, and vows offered as to one having supernatural power. The sphere of the TRANSCENDENTAL cannot now, by that avenue of heroic worth, of eloquent wisdom, or by any other avenue, be so easily reached. The worth that in these days could *transcend* all estimate or survey, and lead men willingly captive into *infinite* admiration, into worship, is still waited for (with little hope) from the unseen Time. All that can be said to offer itself in that kind, at present, is some slight household devotion (*Haus-Andacht*), whereby this or the other enthusiast, privately in all quietness, can love his hero or sage without measure, and idealize, and so, in a sense, idolize him;—which practice, as man is by necessity an idol-worshipper (no offence in him *so* long as *idol* means accurately *vision*, clear *symbol*), and all wicked idolatry is but a *more* idolatrous worship, may be excusable, in certain cases praiseworthy. Be this as it will, let the curious eye gratify itself in observing how the old antediluvian feeling

still, though now struggling out so imperfectly, and forced into unexpected shapes, asserts its existence in the newest man: and the Chaldeans or old Persians, with their Zerdusht, differ only in vesture and dialect from the French, with their Voltaire *étouffé sous des roses.*'[1]

This, doubtless, is a wonderful phraseology, but referable, as the Professor urges, to that capacious reservoir and convenience, 'the nature of the time:' 'A time,' says he, 'when, as in some Destruction of a Roman Empire, wrecks of old things are everywhere confusedly jumbled with rudiments of new; so that, till once the mixture and amalgamation be complete, and even have long continued complete and universally apparent, no grammatical *langue d'oc* or *langue d'oui* can establish itself, but only some barbarous mixed *lingua rustica*, more like a jargon than a language, must prevail; and thus the deepest matters be either barbarously spoken of, or wholly omitted and lost sight of, which were still worse.' But to let the Homily proceed:

'Consider at any rate,' continues he elsewhere, 'under how many categories, down to the most impertinent, the world inquires concerning Great Men, and never wearies striving to represent to itself their whole structure, aspect, procedure, outward and inward! Blame not the world for such minutest curiosity about its great ones: this comes of the world's old-established necessity to worship: and, indeed, whom but its great ones, that "like celestial fire-pillars go before it on the march," ought it to worship? Blame not even that mistaken worship of sham great ones, that are not celestial fire-pillars, but terrestrial glass-lanterns with wick and tallow, under no guidance but a stupid fatuous one; of which worship the litanies and gossip-homilies are, in some quarters of the globe, so inexpressibly uninteresting. Blame it not; pity it rather, with a certain loving respect.

'Man is never, let me assure thee, altogether a clothes-horse: under the clothes there is always a body and a soul. The Count von Bügeleisen, so idolized by our fashionable

[1] *Die Kleider: ihr Werden und Wirken.* Von D. Teufelsdröckh. Weissnichtwo. Stillschweign'sche Buchhandlung, 1830.

classes, is not, as the English Swift asserts, created wholly by the Tailor; but partially also by the supernatural Powers. His beautifully cut apparel, and graceful expensive tackle and environment of all kinds, are but the symbols of a beauty and gracefulness, supposed to be inherent in the Count himself; under which predicament come also our reverence for his counthood, and in good part that other notable phenomenon of his being worshipped because he *is* worshipped, of one idolater, sheep-like, running after him, because many have already run. Nay, on what other principle but this latter hast thou, O reader (if thou be not one of a thousand), read, for example, thy *Homer*, and found some real joy therein? All these things, I say, the apparel, the counthood, the existing popularity and whatever else can combine there, are symbols; —bank notes, which, whether there be gold behind them, or only bankruptcy and empty drawers, pass current for gold. But how, now, could they so pass, if gold itself were not prized, and believed and known to be somewhere extant? Produce the actual gold visibly, and mark how, in these distrustful days, your most accredited bank-paper stagnates in the market! No Holy Alliance, though plush and gilding and genealogical parchment, to the utmost that the time yields, be hung round it, can gain for itself a dominion in the heart of any man; some thirty or forty millions of men's hearts being, on the other hand, subdued into loyal reverence by a Corsican Lieutenant of Artillery. Such is the difference between God-creation and Tailor-creation. Great is the Tailor, but not the greatest. So, too, in matters spiritual, what avails it that a man be Doctor of the Sorbonne, Doctor of Laws, of Both Laws; and can cover half a square foot in pica-type with the list of his fellowships, arranged as equilateral triangle, at the vertex an "&c." over and above, and with the parchment of his diplomas could thatch the whole street he lives in: what avails it? The man is but an owl; of prepossessing gravity, indeed; much respected by simple neighbours; but to whose sorrowful hootings no creature hastens, eager to listen. While, again, let but some riding gauger arrive under cloud of night at a Scottish inn, and word be whispered that

it is Robert Burns ; in few instants all beds and trucklebeds, from garret to cellar, are left vacant, and gentle and simple, with open eyes and erect ears, are gathered together.'

Whereby, at least, from amid this questionable *lingua*, 'more like a jargon than a language,' so much may have become apparent : What unspeakable importance the world attaches, has ever attached (expressing the same by all possible methods) and will ever attach, to its great men. Deep and venerable, whether looked at in the Teufelsdröckh manner or otherwise, is this love of men for great men, this their exclusive admiration of great men ; a quality of vast significance, if we consider it well ; for, as in its origin it reaches up into the highest and even holiest provinces of man's nature, so in his practical history it will be found to play the most surprising part. Does not, for one example, the fact of such a temper indestructibly existing in all men, point out man as an essentially governable and teachable creature, and forever refute that calumny of his being by nature insubordinate, prone to rebellion? Men seldom, or rather never for a length of time and deliberately, rebel against anything that does not deserve rebelling against. Ready, ever zealous is the obedience and devotedness they show to the great, to the really high ; prostrating their whole possession and self, body, heart, soul and spirit, under the feet of whatsoever is authentically above them. Nay, in most times, it is rather a slavish devotedness to those who only seem and pretend to be above them that constitutes their fault.

But why seek special instances? Is not Love, from of old, known to be the beginning of all things? And what is admiration of the great but love of the truly lovable? The first product of love is *imitation*, that all-important peculiar gift of man, whereby Mankind is not only held socially together in the present time, but connected in like union with the past and the future ; so that the attainment of the innumerable Departed can be conveyed down to the Living, and transmitted with increase to the Unborn. Now great men, in particular spiritually great men (for all men have a spirit to guide, though all have not kingdoms to govern and battles to fight),

are the men universally imitated and learned of, the glass in which whole generations survey and shape themselves.

Thus is the Great Man of an age, beyond comparison, the most important phenomenon therein ; all other phenomena, were they Waterloo Victories, Constitutions of the Year One, glorious revolutions, new births of the golden age in what sort you will, are small and trivial. Alas, all these pass away, and are left extinct behind, like the tar-barrels they were celebrated with ; and the new-born golden age proves always to be still-born : neither is there, was there or will there be any other golden age possible, save only in this : in new increase of worth and wisdom ;—that is to say, therefore, in the new arrival among us of wise and worthy men. Such arrivals are the great occurrences, though unnoticed ones : all else that can occur, in what kind soever, is but the *road*, up-hill or down-hill, rougher or smoother ; nowise the *power* that will nerve us for travelling forward thereon. So little comparatively can forethought or the cunningest mechanical precontrivance do for a nation, for a world ! Ever must we wait on the bounty of Time, and see what leader shall be born for us, and whither he will lead. Thus too, in defect of great men, noted men become important : the Noted Man of an age is the emblem and living summary of the Ideal which that age has fashioned for itself : show me the noted man of an age, you show me the age that produced him. Such figures walk in the van, for great good or for great evil ; if not leading, then driven and still farther misleading. The apotheosis of Beau Brummel has marred many a pretty youth ; landed him not at any *goal* where oak garlands, earned by faithful labour and valour, carry men to the immortal gods ; but, by a fatal inversion, at the King's Bench *gaol*, where he that has never sowed shall not any longer reap, still less any longer burn his barn, but scrape himself with potsherds among the ashes thereof, and consider with all deliberation 'what he wanted, and what he wants.'

To enlighten this principle of reverence for the great, to teach us reverence, and whom we are to revere and admire, should ever be a chief aim of Education (indeed it is herein

that instruction properly both begins and ends); and in these late ages, perhaps, more than ever, so indispensable is now our need of clear reverence, so inexpressibly poor our supply. 'Clear reverence!' it was once responded to a seeker of light: 'all want it, perhaps thou thyself.' What wretched idols, of Leeds cloth, stuffed out with bran of one kind or other, do men either worship, or being tired of worshipping (so expensively without fruit), rend in pieces and kick out of doors, amid loud shouting and crowing, what they call 'tremendous cheers,' as if the feat were miraculous! In private life, as in public, delusion in this sort does its work; the blind leading the blind, both fall into the ditch.

'For alas!' cries Teufelsdröckh on this occasion, 'though in susceptive hearts it is felt that a great man is unspeakably great, the specific marks of him are mournfully mistaken: thus must innumerable pilgrims journey, in toil and hope, to shrines where there is no healing. On the fairer half of the creation, above all, such error presses hard. Women are born worshippers; in their good little hearts lies the most craving relish for greatness: it is even said, each chooses her husband on the hypothesis of his being a great man—in his way. The good creatures, yet the foolish! For their choices, no insight, or next to none, being vouchsafed them, are unutterable. Yet how touching also to see, for example, Parisian ladies of quality, all rustling in silks and laces, visit the condemned-cell of a fierce Cartouche; and in silver accents, and with the looks of angels, beg locks of hair from him; as from the greatest, were it only in the profession of highwayman! Still more fatal is that other mistake, the commonest of all, whereby the devotional youth, seeking for a great man to worship, finds such within his own worthy person, and proceeds with all zeal to worship *there*. Unhappy enough: to realize, in an age of such gas-light illumination, this basest superstition of the ages of Egyptian darkness!

'Remark, however, not without emotion, that of all rituals and divine services, and ordinances ever instituted for the worship of any god, this of Self-worship is the ritual most faithfully observed. Trouble enough has the Hindoo devotee,

with his washings, and cookings, and perplexed formularies, tying him up at every function of his existence: but is it greater trouble than that of his German self-worshipping brother; is it trouble even by the devoutest Fakir, so honestly undertaken and fulfilled? I answer, No; for the German's heart is in it. The German worshipper, for whom does he work, and scheme, and struggle, and fight, at his rising up and lying down, in all times and places, but for his god only? Can he escape from that divine presence of Self; can his heart waver, or his hand wax faint in that sacred service? The Hebrew Jonah, prophet as he was, rather than take a message to Nineveh, took ship to Tarshish, hoping to hide there from his Sender; but in what ship-hull or whale's belly shall the madder German Jonah cherish hope of hiding from—Himself! Consider, too, the temples he builds, and the services of (shoulder-knotted) priests he ordains and maintains; the smoking sacrifices, thrice a day or oftener, with perhaps a psalmist or two of broken-winded laureats and literators, if such are to be had. Nor are his votive gifts wanting, of rings and jewels and gold embroideries, such as our Lady of Loretto might grow yellower to look upon. A toilsome, perpetual worship, heroically gone through: and then with what issue? Alas, with the worst. The old Egyptian leek-worshipper had, it is to be hoped, seasons of light and faith: his leek-god seems to smile on him; he is humbled, and in humility exalted, before the majesty of something, were it only that of germinative Physical Nature, seen through a germinating, not unnourishing potherb. The Self-worshipper, again, has no seasons of light, which are not of blue sulphur-light; hungry, envious pride, not humility in any sort, is the ashy fruit of his worship; his self-god growls on him with the perpetual wolf-cry, Give! Give! and your devout Byron, as the Frau Hunt, with a wise simplicity (*geistreich naiv*) once said, "must sit sulking like a great schoolboy, in pet because they have given him a plain bun and not a spiced one."—His bun was a life-rent of God's universe, with the tasks it offered, and the tools to do them with; *à priori*, one might have fancied it could be put up with for once.'

After which wondrous glimpses into the Teufelsdröckh Homily on the *Greatness of Great Men*, it may now be high time to proceed with the matter more in hand; and remark that our own much-calumniated age, so fruitful in noted men, is also not without its great. In noted men, undoubtedly enough, we surpass all ages since the creation of the world; and from two plain causes: First, that there has been a French Revolution, and that there is now pretty rapidly proceeding a European Revolution; whereby everything, as in the Term-day of a great city, when all mortals are removing, has been, so to speak, set out into the street; and many a foolish vessel of dishonour, unnoticed and worth no notice in its own dark corner, has become universally recognizable when once mounted on the summit of some furniture-wagon, and tottering there (as Committee-president, or other head-director), with what is put under it, slowly onwards to its new lodging and arrangement, itself, alas, hardly to get thither without *breakage*. Secondly, that the Printing Press, with stitched and loose leaves, has now come into full action; and makes, as it were, a sort of universal daylight, for removal and revolution and everything else to proceed in, far more commodiously, yet also far more conspicuously. A complaint has accordingly been heard that famous men abound, that we are quite overrun with famous men: however, the remedy lies in the disease itself; crowded succession already means quick oblivion. For wagon after wagon rolls off, and either arrives or is overset; and so, in either case, the vessel of dishonour, which, at worst, we saw only in crossing some street, will afflict us no more.

Of great men, among so many millions of noted men, it is computed that in our time there have been Two; one in the practical, another in the speculative province: Napoleon Buonaparte and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In which dual number, inconsiderable as it is, our time may perhaps specially pride itself, and take precedence of many others; in particular, reckon itself the flower-time of the whole last century and half. Every age will, no doubt, have its superior man or men; but one *so* superior as to take rank among the

high of all ages, this is what we call a great man; this rarely makes his appearance, such bounty of Nature and Accident must combine to produce and unfold him. Of Napoleon and his works all ends of the world have heard: for *such* a host marched not in silence through the frighted deep: few heads there are in this Planet which have not formed to themselves some featured or featureless image of him; his history has been written about, on the great scale and on the small, some millions of times, and still remains to be written: one of our highest literary problems. For such a 'light-nimbus' of glory and renown encircled the man; the environment he walked in was itself so stupendous, that the eye grew dazzled, and mistook his proportions; or quite turned away from him in pain and temporary blindness. Thus even among the clear-sighted there is no unanimity about Napoleon; and only here and there does his own greatness begin to be interpreted, and accurately separated from the mere greatness of his fame and fortune.

Goethe, again, though of longer continuance in the world, and intrinsically of much more unquestionable greatness, and even importance there, could not be so noted by the world: for if the explosion of powder-mines and artillery-parks naturally attracts every eye and ear; the approach of a new-created star (dawning on us, in new-created radiance, from the eternal Deeps!), though *this*, and not the artillery-parks, is to shape our destiny and *rule* the lower earth, is notable at first only to certain stargazers and weather-prophets. Among ourselves especially, Goethe had little recognition: indeed, it was only of late that his existence, as a man and not as a mere sound, became authentically known to us; and some shadow of his high endowments and endeavours, and of the high meaning that might lie therein, arose in the general mind of England, even of intelligent England. Five years ago, to rank him with Napoleon, like him as rising unattainable beyond his class, like him and more than he of quite peculiar moment to all Europe, would have seemed a wonderful procedure; candour even, and enlightened liberality, to grant him place beside this and the other home-born ready-writer,

blessed with that special privilege of 'English cultivation,' and able thereby to write novels, heart-captivating, heart-rending, or of enchaining interest.

Since which time, however, let us say, the progress of clearer apprehension has been rapid and satisfactory: innumerable unmusical voices have already fallen silent on this matter; for in fowls of every feather, even in the pertest choughs and thievish magpies, there dwells a singular reverence of the eagle; no Dulness is so courageous, but if you once show it any gleam of a heavenly Resplendence, it will, at lowest, shut its eyes and say nothing. So fares it here with the old-established British critic; who, indeed, in these days of ours, begins to be strangely situated; so many new things rising on his horizon, black indefinable shapes, magical or not; the old brickfield (where he kneaded insufficient marketable bricks) all stirring under his feet; preternatural, mad-making tones in the earth and air;—with all which what shall an old-established British critic and brickmaker do, but, at wisest, put his hands in his pockets, and, with the face and heart of a British mastiff, though amid dismal enough forebodings, see what it will turn to?

In the younger, more hopeful minds, again, in most minds that can be considered as in a state of growth, German literature is taking its due place: in such, and in generations of other such that are to follow them, some thankful appreciation of the greatest in German literature cannot fail; at all events this feeling that he *is* great and the greatest, whereby appreciation, and what alone is of much value, appropriation, first becomes rightly possible. To forward such on their way towards appropriating what excellence this man realized and created for them, somewhat has already been done, yet not much; much still waits to be done. The field, indeed, is large: there are Forty Volumes of the most significant Writing that has been produced for the last two centuries; there is the whole long Life and heroic Character of him who produced them; all this to expatiate over and inquire into; in both which departments the deepest thinker, and most far-sighted, may find scope enough.

Nevertheless, in these days of the ten-pound franchise, when all the world (perceiving now, like the Irish innkeeper, that 'death and destruction are just coming in') will have itself represented in parliament; and the wits of so many are gone in this direction to gather wool, and must needs return more or less shorn; it were foolish to invite either young or old into great depths of thought on such a remote matter; the tendency of which is neither for the Reform Bill nor against it, but quietly *through* it and beyond it; nowise to prescribe this or that mode of *electing* members, but only to produce a few members *worth* electing. Not for many years (who knows how many!) in these harassed, hand-to-mouth circumstances, can the world's bleared eyes open themselves to study the true import of such topics; of this topic, the highest of such. As things actually stand, some quite cursory glances, and considerations close on the surface, to remind a few (unelected, unelective) parties interested, that it lies over for study, are all that can be attempted here: could we, by any method, in any measure, disclose for such the wondrous wonder-working *element* it hovers in, the *light* it is to be studied and inquired after in, what is needfullest at present were accomplished.

One class of considerations, near enough the surface, we avoid; all that partakes of an elegiac character. True enough, nothing can be *done* or suffered, but there is something to be *said*, wisely or unwisely. The departure of our Greatest contemporary Man could not be other than a great event; fitted to awaken, in all who with understanding beheld it, feelings sad, but high and sacred, of mortality and immortality, of mourning and of triumph; far lookings into the Past and into the Future,—so many changes, fearful and wonderful, of fleeting Time; glimpses too of the Eternity these rest on, which knows no change. At the present date and distance, however, all this pertains not to us; has been uttered elsewhere, or may be left for utterance there. Let us consider the Exequies as past; that the high Rogus, with its sweet-scented wood, amid the wail of music eloquent to speechless hearts, has flamed aloft, heaven-kissing, in sight of all the Greeks;

and that now the ashes of the Hero are gathered into their urn, and the host has marched onwards to new victories and new toils; ever to be mindful of the dead, not to mourn for him any more. The host of the Greeks, in this case, was all thinking Europe: whether their funeral games were appropriate and worthy, we stop not to inquire; the time, in regard to such things, is empty or ill-provided, and this was what the time could conveniently do. All canonization and solemn cremation are gone by; and as yet nothing suitable, nothing that does not border upon parody, has appeared in their room. A Bentham bequeathes his remains to be lectured over in a school of anatomy; and perhaps, even in this way, finds, as chief of the Utilitarians, a really nobler funeral than any other, which the prosaic age, rich only in crapes and hollow scutcheons (of timber as of words), could have afforded him.

The matter in hand being *Goethe's Works*, and the greatest work of every man, or rather the summary and net amount of all his works, being the Life he has led, we ask, as the first question: How it went with Goethe in that matter; what was the practical basis, of want and fulfilment, of joy and sorrow, from which his spiritual productions grew forth; the characters of which they must more or less legibly bear? In which sense, those Volumes entitled by him *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, wherein his personal history, what he has thought fit to make known of it, stands delineated, will long be valuable. A noble commentary, instructive in many ways, lies open there, and yearly increasing in worth and interest; which all readers, now when the true quality of it is ascertained, will rejoice that circumstances induced and allowed him to write: for surely if old Cellini's counsel have any propriety, it is doubly proper in this case: the autobiographic practice he recommends (of which the last century in particular has seen so many worthy and worthless examples) was never so much in place as here. 'All men, of what rank soever,' thus counsels the brave Benvenuto, 'who have accomplished aught virtuous or virtuous-like, should, provided they be conscious of really good purposes, write down their own

life ; nevertheless, not put hand to so worthy an enterprise till after they have reached the age of forty.' All which ukase-regulations Goethe had abundantly fulfilled,—the last as abundantly as any, for he had now reached the age of sixty-two.

'This year, 1811,' says he, 'distinguishes itself for me by persevering outward activity. The *Life of Philip Hackert* went to press; the papers committed to me all carefully elaborated as the case required. By this task I was once more attracted to the South: the occurrences which, at that period, had befallen me there, in Hackert's company or neighbourhood, became alive in the imagination ; I had cause to ask, Why this which I was doing for another should not be attempted for myself? I turned, accordingly, before completion of that volume, to my own earliest personal history ; and, in truth, found here that I had delayed too long. The work should have been undertaken while my mother yet lived ; thereby had I got nigher those scenes of childhood, and been, by her great strength of memory, transported into the midst of them. Now, however, must these vanished apparitions be recalled by my own help ; and, first, with labour, many an incitement to recollection, like a necessary magic apparatus, be devised. To represent the development of a child who had grown to be remarkable, how this exhibited itself under given circumstances, and yet how in general it could content the student of human nature and his views : such was the thing I had to do.

'In this sense, unpretendingly enough, to a work treated with anxious fidelity, I gave the name *Wahrheit und Dichtung* (Truth and Fiction); deeply convinced that man in immediate Presence, still more in Remembrance, fashions and models the external world according to his own peculiarities.

'The business, as, with historical studying, and otherwise recalling of places and persons, I had much time to spend on it, busied me wheresoever I went or stood, at home and abroad, to such a degree that my actual condition became like a secondary matter ; though again, on all hands, when summoned outwards by occasion, I with full force and undivided sense proved myself present.' [1]

These Volumes, with what other supplementary matter has been added to them (the rather as Goethe's was a life of mani-

[1] *Werke*, xxxii. 62.

fold relation, of the widest connexion with important or elevated persons, not to be carelessly laid before the world, and he had the rare good fortune of arranging all things that regarded even his posthumous concernment with the existing generation, according to his own deliberate judgment), are perhaps likely to be, for a long time, our only authentic reference. By the last will of the deceased, it would seem, all his papers and effects are to lie exactly as they are, till after another twenty years.

Looking now into these magically-recalled scenes of childhood and manhood, the student of human nature will under all manner of shapes, from first to last, note one thing: The singularly complex Possibility offered from without, yet along with it the deep never-failing Force from within, whereby all this is conquered and realized. It was as if accident and primary endowment had conspired to produce a character on the great scale; a will is cast abroad into the widest, wildest element, and gifted also in an extreme degree to prevail over this, to fashion this to its own form: in which subordinating and self-fashioning of its circumstances a character properly consists. In external situations, it is true, in occurrences such as could be recited in the Newspapers, Goethe's existence is not more complex than other men's; outwardly rather a pacific smooth existence: but in his inward specialties and depth of faculty and temper, in his position spiritual and temporal towards the world as it was, and the world as he could have wished it, the observant eye may discern complexity, perplexity enough; an extent of data greater, perhaps, than had lain in any life-problem for some centuries. And now, as mentioned, the force for solving this was, in like manner, granted him in extraordinary measure; so that we must say, his possibilities were faithfully and with wonderful success turned into acquisitions; and this man fought the good fight, not only victorious, as all true men are, but victorious without damage, and with an ever-increasing strength for new victory, as only great and happy men are. Not wounds and loss (beyond fast-healing, skin-deep wounds) has the unconquerable to suffer; only ever-enduring toil; weari-

ness,—from which, after rest, he will rise stronger than before.

Good fortune, what the world calls good fortune, awaits him from beginning to end; but also a far deeper felicity than this. Such worldly gifts of good fortune are what we call possibilities: happy he that can rule over them; but *doubly* unhappy he that cannot. Only in virtue of good guidance does that same good fortune prove good. Wealth, health, fiery light with Proteus many-sidedness of mind, peace, honour, length of days: with all this you may make no Goethe, but only some Voltaire; with the most that was fortuitous in all this, make only some short-lived, unhappy, unprofitable Byron.

At no period of the World's History can a gifted man be born when he will not find enough to do; in no circumstances come into life but there will be contradictions for him to reconcile, difficulties which it will task his whole strength to surmount, if his whole strength suffice. Everywhere the human soul stands between a hemisphere of light and another of darkness; on the confines of two everlastingly hostile empires, Necessity and Freewill. A pious adage says, 'the back is made for the burden;' we might with no less truth invert it, and say, the burden was made for the back. Nay, so perverse is the nature of man, it has in all times been found that an external allotment superior to the common was more dangerous than one inferior; thus for a hundred that can bear adversity, there is hardly one that can bear prosperity.

Of riches, in particular, as of the grossest species of prosperity, the perils are recorded by all moralists; and ever, as of old, must the sad observation from time to time occur: Easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle! Riches in a cultured community are the strangest of things; a power all-moving, yet which any the most powerless and skilless can *put* in motion; they are the *readiest* of possibilities; the readiest to become a great blessing or a great curse. 'Beneath gold thrones and mountains,' says Jean Paul, 'who knows how many giant spirits lie entombed!' The first fruit of riches, especially for the man born rich, is to teach him

faith in them, and all but hide from him that there is any other faith: thus is he trained up in the miserable eye-service of what is called Honour, Respectability; instead of a man we have but a *gigman*,—one who 'always kept a gig,' two-wheeled or four-wheeled. Consider too what this same gig-manhood issues in; consider that first and most stupendous of gigmen, Phaeton, the son of Sol, who drove the brightest of all conceivable gigs, yet with the sorrowfullest result. Alas, Phaeton was his father's heir: born to attain the highest fortune without earning it: he had *built* no sun-chariot (could not build the simplest wheelbarrow), but could and would insist on *driving* one; and so broke his own stiff neck, sent gig and horses spinning through infinite space, and set the universe on fire!—Or, to speak in more modest figures, Poverty, we may say, surrounds a man with ready-made barriers, which, if they mournfully gall and hamper, do at least prescribe for him and force on him a sort of course and goal; a safe and beaten though a circuitous course; great part of his guidance is secure against fatal error, is withdrawn from *his* control. The rich, again, has his whole life to guide, without goal or barrier, save of his own choosing; and, tempted as we have seen, is too likely to guide it ill; often, instead of walking straight forward, as he might, does but, like Jeshurun, wax fat and kick; in which process, it is clear, not the adamantine circle of Necessity whereon the World is built, but only his own limb-bones must go to pieces!—Truly, in plain prose, if we bethink us what a road many a Byron and Mirabeau, especially in these latter generations, have gone, it is proof of an uncommon inward wealth in Goethe, that the outward wealth, whether of money or other happiness which Fortune offered him, did in no case exceed the power of Nature to appropriate and wholesomely assimilate; that all outward blessedness grew to inward strength, and produced only blessed effects for him. Those 'gold mountains' of Jean Paul, to the giant that *can* rise above them are excellent, both fortified and speculatory, heights; and do in fact become a *throne*, where happily they have not been a *tomb*.

Goethe's childhood is throughout of riant, joyful character:

kind plenty in every sense, security, affection, manifold excitement, instruction encircles him; wholly an element of sun and azure, wherein the young spirit, awakening and attaining, can on all hands richly unfold itself. A beautiful boy, of earnest, lucid, serenely deep nature, with the peaceful completeness yet infinite incessant expansiveness of a boy, has, in the fittest environment, begun to *be:* beautiful he looks and moves; rapid, gracefully prompt, like the son of Maia; wise, noble, like Latona's son: nay (as all men may *now* see) he is, in very truth, a miniature incipient World-Poet; of all heavenly figures the beautifullest we know of that can visit this lower earth. Lovely enough shine for us those young years in old Teutonic Frankfort; mirrored in the far remembrance of the Self-historian, real yet ideal, they are among our most genuine poetic Idyls. No smallest matter is too small for us, when we think *who* it was that did it or suffered it. The little long-clothed urchin, mercurial enough with all his stillness, can throw a whole cargo of new-marketed crockery, piece by piece from the balcony into the street, when once the feat is suggested to him; and comically shatters cheap delf-ware with the same right hand which tragically wrote and hurled forth the demoniac scorn of Mephistopheles, or as 'right hand' of Faust, 'smote the universe to ruins.' Neither smile more than enough (if thou be wise) that the gray-haired all-experienced man remembers how the boy walked on the Mayn bridge, and 'liked to look at the bright weather-cock' on the barrier there. That foolish piece of gilt wood, there glittering sunlit, with its reflex wavering in the Mayn waters, is awakening quite another glitter in the young gifted soul: is not this foolish sunlit splendour also, now when there is an *eye* to behold it, one of Nature's doings? The eye of the young seer is here, through the paltriest chink, looking into the infinite Splendours of Nature,—where, one day, himself is to enter and dwell.

Goethe's mother appears to have been the more gifted of the parents: a woman of altogether genial character, great spiritual faculty and worth; whom the son, at an after time, put old family friends in mind of. It is gratifying for us that

she lived to witness his maturity in works and honours; to know that the little infant she had nursed was grown to be a mighty man, the first man of his nation and time. In the father, as prosperous citizen of Frankfort, skilled in many things; improved by travel, by studies both practical and ornamental; decorated with some diplomatic title, but passing among his books, paintings, collections and household possessions, social or intellectual, spiritual or material, a quite undiplomatic independent life, we become acquainted with a German, not country- but city-*gentleman* of the last century; a character scarcely ever familiar in our Islands; now perhaps almost obsolete among the Germans too. A positive, methodical man, sound-headed, honest-hearted, sharp-tempered; with an uncommon share of volition, among other things, so that scarcely any obstacle would turn him back, but whatsoever he could not mount over he would struggle round, and in any case *be* at the end of his journey: many or all of whose good qualities passed also over by inheritance; and, in fairer combination, on nobler objects, to the whole world's profit, were seen a second time in action.

Family incidents: house-buildings, or rebuildings; arrivals, departures; in any case, Newyear's-days and birthdays, are not wanting; nor city-incidents; many-coloured tumult of Frankfort fairs; Kaiser's coronations, expected and witnessed; or that glorious ceremonial of the yearly *Pfeiffergericht*, wherein the grandfather himself plays so imperial a part. World-incidents too roll forth their billows into the remotest creek, and alter the current there. The Earthquake of Lisbon hurls the little Frankfort boy into wondrous depths of another sort; enunciating dark theological problems, which no theology of his will solve. Direction, instruction, in like manner, awaits him in the Great Frederic's Seven-Years' War; especially in that long billeting of King's Lieutenant Comte de Thorane, with his sergeants and adjutants, with his painters and picture-easels, his quick precision and decision, his 'dry gallantry' and stately Spanish bearing;—though collisions with the 'house-father,' whose German house-stairs (though he silently endures the inevitable) were not new-built to be

made a French highway of ; who besides loves not the French, but the great invincible Fritz they are striving to beat down. Think, for example, of that singular congratulation on the Victory at Bergen :

'So then, at last, after a restless Passion-week, Passion-Friday, 1759, arrived. A deep stillness announced the approaching storm. We children were forbidden to leave the house ; our father had no rest, and went out. The battle began ; I mounted to the top story where the field indeed was still out of my sight, but the thunder of the cannon and the volleys of the small arms could be fully discerned. After some hours, we saw the first tokens of the battle, in a row of wagons, whereon wounded men, in all sorts of sorrowful dismemberment and gesture, were driven softly past us to the Liebfrauen-Kloster, which had been changed into a hospital. The compassion of the citizens forthwith awoke. Beer, wine, bread, money were given to such as had still power of receiving. But when, ere long, wounded and captive Germans also were noticed in that train, the pity had no limits ; it seemed as if each were bent to strip himself of whatever movable thing he had, to aid his countrymen therewith in their extremity.

'The prisoners, meanwhile, were the symptom of a battle unprosperous for the Allies. My father, in his partiality, quite certain that these would gain, had the passionate rashness to go out to meet the expected visitors ; not reflecting that the beaten side would in that case have to run over him. He went first into his garden, at the Friedberg Gate, where he found all quiet and solitary ; then ventured forth to the Bornheim Heath, where soon, however, various scattered outrunners and baggage-men came in sight, who took the satisfaction, as they passed, of shooting at the boundary-stones, and sent our eager wanderer the reverberated lead singing about his ears. He reckoned it wiser, therefore, to come back ; and learned on some inquiry, what the sound of the firing might already have taught him, that for the French all went well, and no retreat was thought of. Arriving home full of black humour, he quite, at sight of his wounded and prisoner countrymen, lost all composure. From him also many a gift went out for the passing wagons, but only Germans were to taste of it ; which arrangement, as Fate had so huddled friends and foes together, could not always be adhered to.

'Our mother, and we children, who had from the first built

upon the Count's word, and so passed a tolerably quiet day, were greatly rejoiced, and our mother doubly comforted, as she that morning, on questioning the oracle of her jewel-box by the scratch of a needle, had obtained a most consolatory answer not only for the present but for the future. We wished our father a similar belief and disposition; we flattered him what we could, we entreated him to take some food, which he had forborne all day; he refused our caresses and every enjoyment, and retired to his room. Our joy, in the meanwhile, was not disturbed; the business was over: the King's Lieutenant, who to-day, contrary to custom, had been on horseback, at length returned; his presence at home was more needful than ever. We sprang out to meet him, kissed his hands, testified our joy. It seemed to please him greatly. "Well!" said he, with more softness than usual, "I am glad too for your sake, dear children." He ordered us sweetmeats, sweet wine, everything the best, and went to his chamber, where already a mass of importuners, solicitors, petitioners, were crowded.

'We held now a dainty collation; deplored our good father, who could not participate therein, and pressed our mother to bring him down; she, however, knew better, and how uncheering such gifts would be to him. Meanwhile she had put some supper in order, and would fain have sent him up a little to his room; but such irregularity was a thing he never suffered, not in extremest cases; so the sweet gifts being once put aside, she set about entreating him to come down in his usual way. He yielded at last, unwillingly, and little did we know what mischief we were making ready. The stairs ran free through the whole house, past the door of every antechamber. Our father, in descending, had to pass the Count's apartments. His ante-chamber was so full of people that he had at length resolved to come out, and despatch several at once; and this happened, alas, just at the instant our father was passing down. The Count stepped cheerfully out, saluted him and said: "You will congratulate us and yourself that this dangerous affair has gone off so happily."—"Not at all!" replied my father, with grim emphasis: "I wish they had chased you to the Devil, and I myself gone too." The Count held in for a moment, then burst forth with fury: "You shall repent this! You shall not"——'

—Father Goethe, however, has 'in the mean while quietly descended,' and sat down to sup much cheerfuller than for-

merly; he little caring, 'we little knowing, in what questionable way he had rolled the stone from his heart,' and how official friends must interfere, and secret negotiations enough go on, to keep him out of military prison, and worse things that might have befallen there. On all which may we be permitted once again to make the simple reflection: What a plagued and plaguing world, with its battles and bombardments, wars and rumours of war (which sow or reap no ear of corn for any man), this is! The boy, who here watches the musket-volleys and cannon-thunders of the great Fritz, shall, as man, witness the siege of Mentz; fly with Brunswick Dukes before Dumourier and his Sansculottes, through a country champed into one red world of mud, 'like Pharaoh' (for the carriage too breaks down) 'through the Red Sea;' and finally become involved in the universal fire-consummation of Napoleon, and by skill defend himself from hurt therein!—

The father, with occasional subsidiary private tutors, is his son's schoolmaster; a somewhat pedantic pedagogue, with ambition enough and faithful goodwill, but more of rigour than of insight; who, however, works on a subject that he *cannot* spoil. Languages, to the number of six or seven, with whatsoever pertains to them; histories, syllabuses, knowledges-made-easy; not to speak of dancing, drawing, music, or, in due time, riding and fencing: all is taken-in with boundless appetite and aptitude; all is but fuel, injudiciously piled and of wet quality, yet under which works an unquenchable Greek-fire that will feed itself therewith, that will one day make it *all* clear and glowing. The paternal grandmother, recollected as a 'pale, thin, ever white and clean-dressed figure,' provides the children many a satisfaction; and at length, on some festive night, the crowning one of a puppet-show: whereupon ensues a long course of theatrical speculatings and practisings, somewhat as delineated, for another party, in the first book of *Meister's Apprenticeship;* in which Work, indeed, especially in the earlier portion of it, some shadow of the author's personal experience and culture is more than once traceable. Thus Meister's desperate burnt-offering of his young 'Poems on various Occasions,' was the

image of a reality which took place in Leipzig; performed desperately enough, 'on the kitchen hearth, the thick smoke from which, flowing through the whole house, filled our good landlady with alarm.'

Old Imperial-Freetown Frankfort is not without its notabilities, tragic or comic; in any case, impressive and didactic. The young heart is filled with boding to look into the *Judengasse* (Jew-gate), where squalid painful Hebrews are banished to scour old clothes, and in hate, and greed, and Old-Hebrew obstinacy and implacability, work out a wonderful prophetic existence, as 'a people terrible from the beginning;' manages, however, to get admittance to their synagogue, and see a wedding and a circumcision. On its spike, aloft on one of the steeples, grins, for the last two-hundred years, the bleached skull of a malefactor and traitor; properly, indeed, not so much a traitor, as a Radical whose Reform Bill could not be carried through. The future book-writer also, on one occasion, sees the execution of a book; how the huge printed reams rustle in the flames, are stirred-up with oven-forks, and fly half-charred aloft, the sport of winds; from which half-charred leaves, diligently picked up, he pieces himself a copy together, as did many others, and with double earnestness reads it.

As little is the Old Freetown deficient in notable men; all accessible to a grandson of the Schultheiss,[1] who besides is a youth like no other. Of which originals, curious enough, and long since 'vanished from the sale-catalogues,' take only these two specimens:

'Von Reineck, of an old-noble house; able, downright, but stiff-necked; a lean black-brown man, whom I never saw smile. The misfortune befell him that his only daughter was carried-off by a friend of the family. He prosecuted his son-in-law with the most vehement suit; and as the courts, in their formality, would neither fast enough, nor with force

[1] *Schultheiss* is the title of the chief magistrate in some free-towns and republics, for instance, in Berne. It seems to derive itself from *Schuldheissen*, and may mean the Teller of Duty, him by whom what *should* be is *right*.

enough obey his vengeance, he fell out with them; and there arose quarrel on quarrel, process on process. He withdrew himself wholly into his house and the adjoining garden, lived in a spacious but melancholy under-room, where for many years no brush of a painter, perhaps scarcely the besom of a maid, had got admittance. Me he would willingly endure; had specially recommended me to his younger son. His oldest friends, who knew how to humour him, his men of business and agents he often had at table: and, on such occasions, he failed not to invite me. His board was well furnished, his buffet still better. His guests, however, had one torment, a large stove smoking out of many cracks. One of the most intimate ventured once to take notice of it, and ask the host whether he could stand such an inconvenience the whole winter. He answered like a second Timon, and Heautontimorumenos: "Would to God this were the worst mischief of those that plague me!" Not till late would he be persuaded to admit daughter and grandson to his sight: the son-in-law was never more to show face before him.

'On this brave and unfortunate man my presence had a kind effect; for as he gladly spoke with me, in particular instructed me on political and state concerns, he seemed himself to feel assuaged and cheered. Accordingly, the few old friends who still kept about him, would often make use of me when they wished to soothe his indignant humour, and persuade him to any recreation. In fact he now more than once went out with us, and viewed the neighbourhood again, on which, for so many years, he had not turned an eye.' * * *

'Hofrath Huisgen, not a native of Frankfort; of the Reformed religion, and thus incapable of public office, of advocacy among the rest, which latter, however, as a man much trusted for juristic talent, he, under another's signature, contrived quite calmly to practise, as well in Frankfort as in the Imperial Courts,—might be about sixty when I happened to have writing-lessons along with his son, and so came into the house. His figure was large; tall without being bony, broad without corpulency. His face, deformed not only by small-pox, but wanting one of the eyes, you could not look on, for the first time, without apprehension. On his bald head he wore always a perfectly white bell-shaped cap (*Glockenmütze*) tied at top with a ribbon. His nightgowns, of calamanco or damask, were always as if new-washed. He inhabited a most cheerful suite of rooms on the ground floor in the *Allee*, and the neatness of everything about him corresponded to it. The

high order of his books, papers, maps made a pleasant impression. His son, Heinrich Sebastian, who afterwards became known by various writings on Art, promised little in his youth. Good-natured but heavy, not rude yet artless, and without wish to instruct himself, he sought rather to avoid his father, as from his mother he could get whatever he wanted. I, on the other hand, came more and more into intimacy with the master the more I knew of him. As he meddled with none but important law-cases, he had time enough to amuse and occupy himself with other things. I had not long been about him, and listened to his doctrine, till I came to observe that in respect of God and the World he stood on the opposition side. One of his pet books was *Agrippa de Vanitate Scientiarum;* this he particularly recommended me to read, and did therewith set my young brain, for a while, into considerable tumult. I, in the joy of my youth, was inclined to a sort of optimism, and with God or the Gods had now tolerably adjusted myself again; for, by a series of years, I had got to experience that there is many a balance against evil, that misfortunes are things one recovers from, that in dangers one finds deliverance, and does not always break his neck. On what men did and tried, moreover, I looked with tolerance, and found much praiseworthy which my old gentleman would nowise be content with. Nay, once, as he had been depicting me the world not a little on the crabbed side, I noticed in him that he meant still to finish with a trump-card. He shut, as in such cases his wont was, the blind left eye close; looked with the other broad out; and said, in a snuffling voice: "*Auch in Gott entdeck' ich Fehler.*"'

Of a gentler character is the reminiscence of the maternal grandfather, old Schultheiss Textor; with his gift of prophetic dreaming, 'which endowment none of his descendants inherited;' with his kind, mild ways; there as he glides about in his garden, at evening, 'in black velvet cap,' trimming 'the finer sort of fruit-trees,' with aid of those antique embroidered gloves or gauntlets, yearly handed him at the *Pfeiffergericht:* a soft, spirit-looking figure; the farthest outpost of the Past, which behind him melts into dim vapour. In Frau von Klettenberg, a religious associate of the mother's, we become acquainted with the *Schöne Seele* (Fair Saint) of *Meister;* she, at an after period, studied to convert her *Philo,* but only very

partially succeeded. Let us notice also, as a token for good, how the young universal spirit takes pleasure in the workshops of handicraftsmen, and loves to understand their methods of labouring and of living:

'My father had early accustomed me to manage little matters for him. In particular, it was often my commission to stir up the craftsmen he employed; who were too apt to loiter with him; as he wanted to have all accurately done, and finally for prompt payment to have the price moderated. I came, in this way, into almost all manner of workshops; and as it lay in my nature to shape myself into the circumstances of others, to feel every species of human existence, and with satisfaction participate therein, I spent many pleasant hours in such places; grew to understand the procedure of each, and what of joy and of sorrow, advantage or drawback, the indispensable conditions of this or that way of life brought with them. * * * The household economy of the various crafts, which took its figure and colour from the occupation of each, was also silently an object of attention; and so unfolded, so confirmed itself in me the feeling of the equality, if not of all men, yet of all men's situations; existence by itself appearing as the head condition, all the rest as indifferent and accidental.'

And so, amid manifold instructive influences, has the boy grown out of boyhood; when now a new figure enters on the scene, bringing far higher revelations:

'As at last the wine was failing, one of them called the maid; but instead of her there came a maiden of uncommon, and to see her in this environment, of incredible beauty. "What is it?" said she, after kindly giving us good-evening: "the maid is ill and gone to bed: can I serve you?"—"Our wine is done," said one; "couldst thou get us a couple of bottles over the way, it were very good of thee."—"Do it, Gretchen," said another, "it is but a cat's-leap."—"Surely!" said she; took a couple of empty bottles from the table, and hastened out. Her figure, when she turned away from you, was almost prettier than before. The little cap sat so neat on the little head, which a slim neck so gracefully united with back and shoulders. Everything about her seemed select; and you could follow the whole form more calmly, as atten-

tion was not now attracted and arrested by the true still eyes and lovely mouth alone.'

It is at the very threshold of youth that this episode of Gretchen (Margarete, Mar-*g'ret'-kin*) occurs; the young critic of slim necks and true still eyes shall now know something of natural magic, and the importance of one mortal to another; the wild-flowing bottomless sea of human Passion, glorious in auroral light (which, alas, may become infernal lightning), unveils itself a little to him. A graceful little episode we reckon it; and Gretchen better than most first-loves: wholly an innocent, wise, dainty maiden; pure and poor,—who vanishes from us here; but, we trust, in some quiet nook of the Rhineland, became wife and mother, and was the joy and sorrow of some brave man's heart, according as it is appointed. To the boy himself it ended painfully, almost fatally, had not sickness come to his deliverance; and here too he may experience how 'a shadow chases us in all manner of sunshine,' and in this *What-d'ye-call-it* of Existence the tragic element is not wanting. The name of Gretchen, not her story, which had nothing in it of that guilt and terror, has been made world-famous in the Play of *Faust*.—

Leipzig University has the honour of matriculating him. The name of his 'propitious mother' she may boast of, but not of the reality: alas, in these days, the University of the Universe is the only propitious mother of such; all other propitious mothers are but unpropitious superannuated dry-nurses fallen bedrid, from whom the famished nursling has to *steal* even bread and water, if he will not die; whom for most part he soon takes leave of, giving perhaps (as in Gibbon's case), for farewell thanks, some rough tweak of the nose; and rushes desperate into the wide world an orphan. The time is advancing, slower or faster, when the bedrid dry-nurse will decease, and be succeeded by a walking and stirring wet one. Goethe's employments and culture at Leipzig lay in quite other groves than the academic: he listened to the Ciceronian Ernesti with eagerness, but the life-giving word flowed not from his mouth; to the sacerdotal, eclectic-sentimental Gel-

lert (the divinity of all tea-table moral philosophers of both sexes); witnessed 'the pure soul, the genuine will of the noble man,' heard 'his admonitions, warnings and entreaties, uttered in a somewhat hollow and melancholy tone,'—and then the Frenchman say to it all, *Laissez le faire, il nous forme des dupes.* 'In logic it seemed to me very strange that I must now take up those spiritual operations which from of old I had executed with the utmost convenience, and tatter them asunder, insulate and as if destroy them, that their right employment might become plain to me. Of the Thing, of the World, of God, I fancied I knew almost about as much as the Doctor himself; and he seemed to me, in more than one place, to hobble dreadfully (*gewaltig zu hapern*).'

However, he studies to some profit with the Painter Oeser; hears, one day, at the door, with horror, that there is no lesson, for news of Winkelmann's assassination have come. With the ancient Gottsched, too, he has an interview: alas, it is a young Zeus come to dethrone old Saturn, whose time in the literary heaven is nigh run; for on Olympus itself, one Demiurgus passeth away and another cometh. Gottsched had introduced the reign of *water*, in all shapes liquid and solid, and long gloriously presided over the same: but now there is enough of it, and the 'rayless majesty' (had he been prophetic) here beheld the rayed one, before whom he was to melt away:

'We announced ourselves. The servant led us into a large room, and said his master would come immediately. Whether we misinterpreted a motion he made I cannot say; at any rate, we fancied he had beckoned us to advance into an adjoining chamber. We did advance, and to a singular scene; for, at the same moment, Gottsched, the huge broad gigantic man, entered from the opposite door, in green damask nightgown, lined with red taffeta; but his enormous head was bald and without covering. This, however, was the very want to be now supplied: for the servant came springing-in at the side-door, with a full-bottomed wig on his hand (the locks fell down to his elbow), and held it out, with terrified gesture, to his master. Gottsched, without uttering the smallest complaint, lifted the head-gear with his left hand from the servant's arm;

and very deftly swinging it up to its place on the head, at the same time, with his right hand, gave the poor man a box on the ear, which, as is seen in comedies, dashed him spinning out of the apartment; whereupon the respectable-looking Patriarch quite gravely desired us to be seated, and with proper dignity went through a tolerably long discourse.'

In which discourse, however, it is likely, little edification for the young inquirer could lie. Already by multifarious discoursings and readings he has convinced himself, to his despair, of the watery condition of the Gottschedic world; and how 'the *Noachide* (Noaheid) of Bodmer is a true symbol of 'the deluge that has swelled-up round the German Parnassus,' and in literature as in philosophy there is neither landmark nor loadstar. Here, too, he resumes his inquiries about religion, falls into 'black scruples' about most things; and in 'the bald and feeble deliverances' propounded him has sorry comfort. Outward things, moreover, go not as they should: the copious philosophic harlequinades of that wag, Beyrish 'with a long nose,' unsettle rather than settle; as do, in many ways, other wise and foolish mortals of both sexes: matters grow worse and worse. He falls sick, becomes wretched enough; yet unfolds withal 'an audacious humour which feels itself superior to the moment, not only fears no danger, but even wilfully courts it.' And thus, somewhat in a wrecked state, he quits his propitious mother, and returns home.

Nevertheless let there be no reflections: he must now in earnest get forward with his Law, and on to Strasburg to complete himself therein; so has the paternal judgment arranged it. A Lawyer, the thing in these latter days called Lawyer, of a man in whom ever-bounteous Nature has sent us a Poet for the World! O blind mortals, blind over what lies closest to us, what we have the truest wish to see! In this young colt that caprioles there in young lustihood, and snuffs the wind with an 'audacious humour,' rather dangerous-looking, no Sleswic Dobbin, to rise to dromedary stature, and draw three tons avoirdupois (of street-mud or whatever else), has been vouchsafed; but a winged miraculous Pegasus to carry us to the heavens!—Whereon too (if we consider it) many a

heroic Bellerophon shall, in times coming, mount, and destroy Chimæras, and deliver afflicted nations on the lower earth.

Meanwhile, be this as it may, the youth is gone to Strasburg to prepare for the *examen rigorosum;* though, as it turned out, for quite a different than the Law one. Confusion enough is in his head and heart; poetic objects too have taken root there, and will not rest till they have worked themselves into form. 'These,' says he, 'were Götz von Berlichingen and Faust. The written Life of the former had seized my inmost soul. The figure of a rude well-meaning self-helper, in wild anarchic time, excited my deepest sympathy. The impressive puppet-show Fable of the other sounded and hummed through me many-toned enough.'—'Let us withdraw, however,' subjoins he, 'into the free air, to the high broad platform of the Minster; as if the time were still here, when we young ones often rendezvoused thither to salute, with full rummers, the sinking sun.' They had good telescopes with them; 'and one friend after another searched out the spot in the distance which had become the dearest to him; neither was I without a little eye-mark of the like, which, though it rose not conspicuous in the landscape, drew me to it beyond all else with a kindly magic.' This alludes, we perceive, to that Alsatian Vicar of Wakefield, and his daughter the fair Frederike; concerning which matter a word may not be useless here. Exception has been taken by certain tender souls, of the all-for-love sort, against Goethe's conduct in that business. He flirted with his blooming blue-eyed Alsatian, she with him, innocently enough, thoughtlessly enough, till they both came to love each other; and then, when the marrying point began to grow visible in the distance, he stopt short and would no farther. Adieu, he cried, and waved his lily hand. 'The good Frederike was weeping; I too was sick enough at heart.' Whereupon arises the question: Is Goethe a bad man; or is he not a bad man? Alas, worthy souls! if this world were all a wedding dance, and *Thou-shalt* never came into collision with *Thou-wilt*, what a new improved time had we of it! But it is man's miserable lot, in the meanwhile, to eat and labour as well as wed; alas, how often, like Cor-

poral Trim, does he spend the whole night, one moment dividing the world into two halves with his fair Beguine, next moment remembering that he has only a knapsack and fifteen florins to divide with any one! Besides, you do not consider that our dear Frederike, whom we too could weep for if it served, had a sound German heart within her stays; had furthermore abundance of *work* to do, and not even leisure to die of love; above all, that at this period, in the country parts of Alsatia, there were no circulating-library novels.

With regard to the false one's cruelty of temper, who, if we remember, saw a ghost in broad noon that day he rode away from her, let us, on the other hand, hear Jung Stilling, for he also had experience thereof at this very date. Poor Jung, a sort of German Dominie Sampson, awkward, honest, irascible, 'in old-fashioned clothes and bag-wig,' who had been several things, charcoal-burner, and, in repeated alternation, tailor and schoolmaster, was now come to Strasburg to study medicine; with purse long-necked, yet with head that had brains in it, and heart full of trust in God. A pious soul, who if he did afterwards write books on the Nature of Departed Spirits, also restored to sight (by his skill in eye-operations) above *two thousand poor blind persons*, without fee or reward, even supporting many of them in the hospital at his own expense.

'There dined,' says he, 'at this table about twenty people, whom the two comrades saw one after the other enter. One especially, with large bright eyes, magnificent brow, and fine stature, walked gallantly (*muthig*) in. He drew Herr Troost's and Stilling's eyes on him; Herr Troost said, "That must be a superior man." Stilling assented, yet thought they would both have much vexation from him, as he looked like one of your wild fellows. This did Stilling infer from the frank style which the student had assumed; but here he was far mistaken. They found, meanwhile, that this distinguished individual was named Herr Goethe.

'Herr Troost whispered to Stilling, "Here it were best one sat seven days silent." Stilling felt this truth; they sat silent, therefore, and no one particularly minded them, except that Goethe now and then hurled over (*herüberwälzte*) a look: he sat opposite Stilling, and had the government of the table without aiming at it.

'Herr Troost was neat, and dressed in the fashion; Stilling likewise tolerably so. He had a dark-brown coat with fustian undergarments: only that a scratch-wig also remained to him, which, among his bag-wigs he would wear out. This he had put on one day, and came therewith to dinner. Nobody took notice of it except Herr Waldberg of Vienna. That gentleman looked at him; and as he had already heard that Stilling was greatly taken up about religion, he began, and asked him, Whether he thought Adam in Paradise had worn a scratch-wig? All laughed heartily, except Salzman, Goethe and Troost; these did not laugh. In Stilling wrath rose and burnt, and he answered: "Be ashamed of this jest; such a trivial thing is not worth laughing at!" But Goethe struck-in and added: "Try a man first whether he deserves mockery. It is devil-like to fall upon an honest-hearted person who has injured nobody, and make sport of him!" From that time Herr Goethe took up Stilling, visited him, liked him, made friendship and brothership with him, and strove by all opportunities to do him kindness. Pity that so few are acquainted with this noble man in respect of his heart!'[1]

Here, indeed, may be the place to mention, that this noble man, in respect of his heart, and goodness and badness, is not altogether easy to get acquainted with; that innumerable persons, of the man-milliner, parish-clerk and circulating-library sort, will find him a hard nut to crack. Hear in what questionable manner, so early as the year 1773, he expresses himself towards Herr Sulzer, whose beautiful hypothesis, that 'Nature meant, by the constant influx of satisfactions streaming-in upon us, to fashion our minds, on the whole, to softness and sensibility,' he will not leave a leg to stand on. '*On the whole*,' says he, 'she does no such thing; she rather, God be thanked, hardens her genuine children against the pains and evils she incessantly prepares for them; so that we name him the happiest man who is the strongest to make front against evil, to put it aside from him, and in defiance of it go the road of his own will.' 'Man's art in all situations is to fortify himself against Nature, to avoid her thousandfold ills, and only to enjoy his measure of the good; till at length he manages to

[1] *Stilling's Wanderschaft.* Berlin and Leipzig, 1778.

include the whole circulation of his true and factitious wants in a palace, and fix as far as possible all scattered beauty and felicity within his glass walls, where accordingly he grows ever the weaker, takes to "joys of the soul," and his powers, roused to their natural exertion by no contradiction, melt away into'—*horresco referens*—'Virtue, Benevolence, Sensibility!' In Goethe's Writings too, we all know, the moral lesson is seldom so easily educed as one would wish. Alas, how seldom is he so direct in tendency as his own plain-spoken moralist at Plundersweilern:

> 'Dear Christian people, one and all,
> When will you cease your singing?
> Else can your comfort be but small,
> Good hap scarce have beginning:
> For Vice is hurtful unto man,
> In Virtue lies his surest plan;

or, to give it in the original words, the emphasis of which no foreign idiom can imitate:

> '*Die Tugend ist das hochste Gut,*
> *Das Laster Weh dem Menschen thut!*'

In which emphatic couplet, does there not, as the critics say in other cases, lie the essence of whole volumes, such as we have read?—

Goethe's far most important relation in Strasburg was the accidental temporary one with Herder; which issued, indeed, in a more permanent, though at no time an altogether intimate one. Herder, with much to give, had always something to require; living with him seems never to have been wholly a sinecure. Goethe and he moreover were fundamentally different, not to say discordant; neither could the humour of the latter be peculiarly sweetened by his actual business in Strasburg, that of undergoing a surgical operation on 'the lachrymatory duct,' and, above all, an unsuccessful one:

'He was attending the Prince of Holstein-Eutin, who laboured under mental distresses, on a course of travel; and

had arrived with him at Strasburg. Our society, so soon as his presence there was known, felt a strong wish to get near him; which happiness, quite unexpectedly and by chance, befell me first. I had gone to the Inn *zum Geist*, visiting I forget what stranger of rank. Just at the bottom of the stairs I came upon a man, like myself about to ascend, whom by his look I could take to be a clergyman. His powdered hair was fastened-up into a round lock, the black coat also distinguished him; still more a long black silk mantle, the end of which he had gathered together and stuck into his pocket. This in some measure surprising, yet on the whole gallant and pleasing figure, of whom I had already heard speak, left me no doubt but it was the famed Traveller; and my address soon convinced him that he was known to me. He asked my name, which could not be of any significance to him; however my openness seemed to give pleasure, for he replied to it in friendly style, and as we stept up-stairs, forthwith showed himself ready for a lively communication. Our visit also was to the same party; and before separating I begged permission to wait upon himself, which he kindly enough accorded me. I delayed not to make repeated use of this preferment; and was the longer the more attracted towards him. He had something softish in his manner, which was fit and dignified, without strictly being bred. A round face; a fine brow; a somewhat short blunt nose; a somewhat projected, yet highly characteristic, pleasant, amiable mouth. Under black eyebrows, a pair of coal-black eyes, which failed not of their effect, though one of them was wont to be red and inflamed.'

With this gifted man, by five years his senior, whose writings had already given him a name, and announced the much that lay in him, the open-hearted disciple could manifoldly communicate, learning and enduring. Erelong, under that 'softish manner,' there disclosed itself a 'counterpulse' of causticity, of ungentle almost noisy banter; the blunt nose was too often curled in an adunco-suspensive manner. Whatsoever of self-complacency, of acquired attachment and insight, of self-sufficiency well or ill grounded, lay in the youth, was exposed, we can fancy, to the severest trial. In Herder too, as in an expressive microcosm, he might see imaged the whole wide world of German literature, of European Thought; its old workings and misworkings, its best recent tendencies

and efforts; what its past and actual wasteness, perplexity, confusion worse confounded, was. In all which, moreover, the bantered, yet imperturbably inquiring brave young man had quite other than a theoretic interest, being himself minded to dwell there. It is easy to conceive that Herder's presence, stirring-up in that fashion so many new and old matters, would mightily aggravate the former 'fermentation;' and thereby, it is true, unintentionally or not, forward the same towards clearness.

In fact, with the hastiest glance over the then position of the world spiritual, we shall find that as Disorder is never wanting (and for the young spiritual hero, who is there only to destroy Disorder and make it Order, can least of all be wanting), so, at the present juncture, it specially abounded. Why dwell on this often delineated Epoch? Over all Europe the reign of Earnestness had now wholly dwindled into that of Dilettanteism. The voice of a certain modern 'closet-logic,' which called itself, and could not but call itself, Philosophy, had gone forth, saying, Let there be darkness, and there was darkness. No Divinity any longer dwelt in the world; and as men cannot do without a Divinity, a sort of terrestrial upholstery one had been got together, and named Taste, with medallic virtuosi and picture cognoscenti, and enlightened letter and belles-letters men enough for priests. To which worship, with its stunted formularies and hungry results, must the earnest mind, like the hollow and shallow one, adjust itself, as best might be. To a new man, no doubt, the Earth is always new, never wholly without interest. Knowledge, were it only that of dead languages, or of dead actions, the foreign tradition of what others had acquired and done, was still to be searched after; fame might be enjoyed if procurable; above all, the culinary and brewing arts remained in pristine completeness, their results could be relished with pristine vigour. Life lumbered along, better or worse, in pitiful discontent, not yet in decisive desperation, as through a dim day of languor, sultry and sunless. Already too on the horizon might be seen clouds, might be heard murmurs, which by and by proved themselves of an electric

character, and were to cool and clear that same sultriness in wondrous deluges.

To a man standing in the midst of German literature, and looking out thither for his highest good, the view was troubled perhaps with various peculiar perplexities. For two centuries, German literature had lain in the sere leaf. The Luther, 'whose words were half battles,' and such half battles as could shake and overset half Europe with their cannonading, had long since gone to sleep; and all other words were but the miserable bickering of theological camp-sutlers in quarrel over the stripping of the slain. Ulrich Hutten slept silent, in the little island of the Zurich Lake; the weary and heavy-laden had wiped the sweat from his brow, and laid him down to rest there: the valiant, fire-tempered heart, with all its woes and loves and loving indignations, mouldered, cold, forgotten; with such a pulse no new heart rose to beat. The tamer Opitzes and Flemmings of a succeeding era had, in like manner, long fallen obsolete. One unhappy generation after another of pedants, 'rhizophagous,' living on roots, Greek or Hebrew; of farce-writers, gallant-verse writers, journalists and other jugglers of nondescript sort, wandered in nomadic wise, whither provender was to be had; among whom, if a passionate Gunther go with some emphasis to ruin; if an illuminated Thomasius, earlier than the general herd, deny witchcraft, we are to esteem it a felicity. This too, however, has passed; and now, in manifold enigmatical signs, a new Time announces itself. Well-born Hagedorns, munificent Gleims have again rendered the character of Author honourable; the polish of correct, assiduous Rabeners and Ramlers have smoothed away the old impurities; a pious Klopstock, to the general enthusiasm, rises anew into something of seraphic music, though by methods wherein he can have no follower; the brave spirit of a Lessing pierces, in many a life-giving ray, through the dark inertness: Germany has risen to a level with Europe, is henceforth participant of all European influences; nay it is now appointed, though not yet ascertained, that Germany is to be the leader of spiritual Europe. A deep movement agitates the universal mind of

Germany, though as yet no one sees towards what issue; only that heavings and eddyings, confused, conflicting tendencies, work unquietly everywhere; the movement is begun and will not stop, but the course of it is yet far from ascertained. Even to the young man now looking-on with such anxious intensity had this very task been allotted: To find it a course, and set it flowing thereon.

Whoever will represent this confused revolutionary condition of all things, has but to fancy how it would act on the most susceptive and comprehensive of living minds; what a Chaos he had taken in, and was dimly struggling to body forth into a Creation. Add to which, his so confused, contradictory personal condition; appointed by a positive father to be practitioner of Law, by a still more positive mother (old Nature herself) to be practitioner of Wisdom, and Captain of spiritual Europe: we have confusion enough for him, doubts economic and doubts theologic, doubts moral and æsthetical, a whole world of confusion and doubt.

Nevertheless to the young Strasburg student the gods had given their most precious gift, which is worth all others, without which all others are worth nothing; a seeing eye and a faithful loving heart:

> *'Er hatt' ein Auge treu und klug,*
> *Und war auch liebevoll genug,*
> *Zu schauen manches klar und rein,*
> *Und wieder alles zu machen sein;*
> *Hatt' auch eine Zunge die sich ergoss,*
> *Und leicht und fein in Worte floss;*
> *Dess thaten die Musen sich erfreun,*
> *Wollten ihn zum Meistersänger weihn.'* [1]

A mind of all-piercing vision, of sunny strength, not made to ray-out darker darkness, but to bring warm sunlight, all-purifying, all-uniting. A clear, invincible mind, and 'consecrated to be Master-singer' in quite another guild than that Nürnberg one.

[1] *Hans Sachsens Poetische Sendung* (*Goethe's Werke*, xiii.); a beautiful piece (a very *Hans Sachs beatified*, both in character and style), which we wish there was any possibility of translating.

His first literary productions fall in his twenty-third year; *Werter*, the most celebrated of these, in his twenty-fifth. Of which wonderful Book, and its now recognised character as poetic (and prophetic) utterance of the World's Despair, it is needless to repeat what has elsewhere been written. This and *Götz von Berlichingen*, which also, as a poetic looking back into the past, was a word for the world, have produced incalculable effects;—which now indeed, however some departing echo of them may linger in the wrecks of our own Mosstrooper and Satanic Schools, do at length all happily lie behind us. Some trifling incidents at Wetzlar, and the suicide of an unhappy acquaintance, were the means of 'crystalising' that wondrous perilous stuff, which the young heart oppressively held dissolved in it, into this world-famous, and as it proved world-medicative *Werter*. He had gone to Wetzlar with an eye still to Law; which now, however, was abandoned, never to be resumed. Thus did he too, 'like Saul the son of Kish, go out to seek his father's asses, and instead thereof find a kingdom.'

With the completion of these two Works (a completion in every sense, for they were not only emitted, but speedily also *de*mitted, and seen over, and left behind), commences what we can specially call his Life, his activity as Man. The outward particulars of it, from this point where his own Narrative ends, have been briefly summed up in these terms:

'In 1776, the Heir-apparent of Weimar was passing through Frankfort, on which occasion, by the intervention of some friends, he waited upon Goethe. The visit must have been mutually agreeable; for a short time afterwards the young author was invited to court; apparently to contribute his assistance in various literary institutions and arrangements then proceeding or contemplated; and in pursuance of this honourable call, he accordingly settled at Weimar, with the title of *Legationsrath*, and the actual dignity of a place in the *Collegium*, or Council. The connexion begun under such favourable auspices, and ever afterwards continued under the like or better, has been productive of important consequences, not only to Weimar but to all Germany. The noble purpose under-

taken by the Duchess Amelia was zealously forwarded by the young Duke on his accession; under whose influence, supported and directed by his new Councillor, this inconsiderable state has gained for itself a fairer distinction than any of its larger, richer or more warlike neighbours. By degrees whatever was brightest in the genius of Germany had been gathered to this little court; a classical theatre was under the superintendence of Goethe and Schiller; here Wieland taught and sung; in the pulpit was Herder; and possessing such a four, the small town of Weimar, some five-and-twenty years ago, might challenge the proudest capital of the world to match it in intellectual wealth. Occupied so profitably to his country, and honourably to himself, Goethe continued rising in favour with his Prince; by degrees a political was added to his literary trust; in 1779 he became Privy Councillor; President in 1782; and at length after his return from Italy, where he had spent two years in varied studies and observation, he was appointed Minister; a post which he only a few years ago resigned, on his final retirement from public affairs.'

Notable enough that little Weimar should, in this particular, have brought back, as it were, an old Italian Commonwealth into the nineteenth century! For the Petrarcas and Boccaccios, though reverenced as Poets, were not supposed to have lost their wits as men; but could be employed in the highest services of the state, not only as fit, but as the fittest, to discharge these. Very different with us, where Diplomatists and Governors can be picked up from the highways, or chosen in the manner of blindman's buff (the first figure you clutch, say rather that clutches *you*, will make a governor); and, even in extraordinary times, it is thought much if a Milton can become Latin Clerk under some Bulstrode Whitlocke, and be called 'one Mr. Milton.' As if the poet, with his poetry, were no other than a pleasant mountebank with faculty of a certain ground-and-lofty tumbling which would amuse; for which you must throw him a few coins, a little flattery, otherwise he would not amuse you with it. As if there were any talent whatsoever; above all, as if there were any talent of Poetry (by the consent of all ages the highest talent, and sometimes pricelessly high), the first foundation of which

were not even these two things (properly but one thing): intellectual Perspicacity, with force and honesty of Will. Which two, do they not, in their simplest quite naked form, constitute the very equipment a Man of Business needs; the very implements whereby *all* business, from that of the delver and ditcher to that of the legislator and imperator, is accomplished; as in their noblest concentration they are still the moving faculty of the Artist and Prophet!

To Goethe himself this connexion with Weimar opened the happiest course of life which, probably, the age he lived in could have yielded him. Moderation, yet abundance; elegance without luxury or sumptuosity: Art enough to give a heavenly firmament to his existence; Business enough to give it a solid earth. In his multifarious duties he comes in contact with all manner of men; gains experience and tolerance of all men's ways. A faculty like his, which could master the highest spiritual problems, and conquer Evil Spirits in their own domain, was not likely to be foiled by such when they put on the simpler shape of material clay. The greatest of Poets is also the skilfullest of Managers: the little terrestrial Weimar trust committed to him prospers; and one sees with a sort of smile, in which may lie a deep seriousness, how the Jena Museums, University arrangements, Weimar Art-exhibitions and Palace-buildings, are guided smoothly on, by a hand which could have worthily swayed imperial sceptres. The world, could it entrust its imperial sceptres to such hands, were blessed: nay to this man, without the world's consent given or asked, a still higher function *had* been committed. But on the whole, we name his external life happy, among the happiest, in this, that a noble princely Courtesy could dwell in it, based on the worship, by speech and practice, of Truth only (for his victory, as we said above, was so complete, as almost to hide that there had been a struggle), and the worldly could praise him as the most agreeable of men, and the spiritual as the highest and clearest; but happy above all, in this, that it forwarded him, as no other could have done, in his inward life, the good or evil hap of which was alone of permanent importance.

The inward life of Goethe, onward from this epoch, lies nobly recorded in the long series of his Writings. Of these, meanwhile, the great bulk of our English world has nowise yet got to such understanding and mastery, that we could, with much hope of profit, go into a critical examination of their merits and characteristics. Such a task can stand over till the day for it arrive ; be it in this generation, or the next, or after the next. What has been elsewhere already set forth suffices the present want, or needs only to be repeated and enforced ; the expositor of German things must say, with judicious Zanga in the play : "First recover that, then shalt thou know more." A glance over the grand outlines of the matter, and more especially under the aspect suitable to these days, can alone be in place here.

In *Goethe's Works,* chronologically arranged, we see this above all things : A mind working itself into clearer and clearer freedom ; gaining a more and more perfect dominion of its world. The pestilential fever of Scepticism runs through its stages ; but happily it ends and disappears at the last stage, not in death, not in chronic malady (the commonest way), but in clearer, henceforth invulnerable health. *Werter* we called the voice of the world's despair : passionate, uncontrollable is this voice ; not yet melodious and supreme,—as nevertheless we at length hear it in the wild apocalyptic *Faust :* like a death-song of departing worlds ; no voice of joyful 'morning stars singing together' over a Creation ; but of red nigh-extinguished midnight stars, in spheral swan-melody, proclaiming, It is ended !

What follows, in the next period, we might, for want of a fitter term, call Pagan or Ethnic in character ; meaning thereby an anthropomorphic character, akin to that of old Greece and Rome. *Wilhelm Meister* is of that stamp, warm, hearty, sunny human Endeavour ; a free recognition of Life, in its depth, variety and majesty ; as yet no Divinity recognised there. The famed *Venetian Epigrams* are of the like Old Ethnic tone : musical, joyfully strong ; true, yet not the whole truth, and sometimes in their blunt realism jarring on the sense. As in this, oftener cited per-

haps, by a certain class of wise men, than the due proportion demanded:

> Why so bustleth the People and crieth ?—Would find itself victual,
> Children too would beget, feed on the best may be had!
> Mark in thy notebooks, Traveller, this, and at home go do likewise:
> Farther reacheth no man, make he what stretching he will.

Doubt, reduced into Denial, now lies prostrate under foot: the fire has done its work, an old world is in ashes; but the smoke and the flame are blown away, and a sun again shines clear over the ruin, to raise therefrom a new nobler verdure and flowerage. Till at length, in the third or final period, melodious Reverence becomes triumphant; a deep all-pervading Faith, with mild voice, grave as gay, speaks forth to us in a *Meisters Wanderjahre*, in a *West-Oestlicher Divan;* in many a little *Zahme Xenie*, and true-hearted little rhyme, 'which,' it has been said, 'for pregnancy and genial significance, except in the Hebrew Scriptures, you will nowhere match.' As here, striking in almost at a venture:

> Like as a Star,
> That maketh not haste,
> That taketh not rest,
> Be each one fulfilling
> His god-given Hest.[1]

Or this small Couplet, which the reader, if he will, may substitute for whole horse-loads of *Essays on the Origin of Evil*,

[1] *Wie das Gestirn,*
Ohne Hast,
Aber ohne Rast,
Drehe sich jeder
Um die eigne Last.

So stands it in the original; hereby, however, hangs a tale:

'A fact,' says one of our fellow-labourers in this German vineyard, 'has but now come to our knowledge, which we take pleasure and pride in stating. Fifteen Englishmen, entertaining that high consideration for the Good Goethe, which the labours and high deserts of a long life usefully employed so richly merit from all mankind, have presented him

a spiritual manufacture which in these enlightened times ought ere now to have gone out of fashion :

> " What shall I teach thee, the foremost thing ? "
> Couldst teach me off my own Shadow to spring !

Or the pathetic picturesqueness of this :

> A rampart-breach is every Day,
> Which many mortals are storming :
> Fall in the gap who may,
> Of the slain no heap is forming.
>
> *Eine Bresche ist jeder Tag,*
> *Die viele Menschen erstürmen ;*
> *Wer da auch fallen mag,*
> *Die Todten sich niemals thürmen.*

In such spirit, and with an eye that takes in all provinces of human Thought, Feeling and Activity, does the Poet stand forth as the true prophet of his time ; victorious over its con-

with a highly wrought Seal, as a token of their veneration.' We must pass over the description of the gift, for it would be too elaborate ; suffice it to say, that amid tasteful carving and emblematic embossing enough, stood these words engraven on a gold belt, on the four sides respectively : *To the German Master : From Friends in England : 28th August :* 1831 ; finally, that the impression was a star encircled with a serpent-of-eternity, and this motto: *Ohne Hast Aber Ohne Rast.*

'The following is the Letter which accompanied it :

' " *To the Poet Goethe, on the 28th of August* 1831.

' " Sir,—Among the friends whom this so interesting Anniversary calls round you, may we 'English friends,' in thought and symbolically, since personally it is impossible, present ourselves to offer you our affectionate congratulations. We hope you will do us the honour to accept this little Birthday Gift, which, as a true testimony of our feelings, may not be without value.

' " We said to ourselves : As it is always the highest duty and pleasure to show reverence to whom reverence is due, and our chief, perhaps our only benefactor is he who by act and word instructs us in wisdom,—so we, undersigned, feeling towards the Poet Goethe as the spiritually taught towards their spiritual teacher, are desirous to express that sentiment openly and in common ; for which end we have determined to solicit his acceptance of a small English gift, proceeding from us all

tradiction, possessor of its wealth ; embodying the nobleness of the past into a new whole, into a new vital nobleness for the present and the future. Antique nobleness in all kinds, yet worn with new clearness ; the spirit of it is preserved and again revealed in shape, when the former shape and vesture had become old (as vestures do), and was dead and cast forth ; and we mourned as if the spirit too were gone. This, we are aware, is a high saying ; applicable to no other man living, or that has lived for some two centuries ; ranks Goethe, not only

equally, on his approaching birthday ; that so, while the venerable man still dwells among us, some memorial of the gratitude we owe him, and think the whole world owes him, may not be wanting.

'"And thus our little tribute, perhaps among the purest that men could offer to man, now stands in visible shape, and begs to be received. May it be welcome, and speak permanently of a most close relation, though wide seas flow between the parties!

'"We pray that many years may be added to a life so glorious, that all happiness may be yours, and strength given to complete your high task, even as it has hitherto proceeded, like a star, without haste, yet without rest.

'"We remain, Sir, your friends and servants,

'"FIFTEEN ENGLISHMEN."

'The wonderful old man, to whom distant and unknown friends had paid such homage, could not but be moved at sentiments expressed in such terms. We hear that he values the token highly, and has condescended to return the following lines for answer:

"DEN FUNFZEHN ENGLISCHEN FREUNDEN.

Worte die der Dichter spricht,
Treu, in heimischen Bezirken,
Wirken gleich, doch weiss er nicht
Ob sie in die Ferne wirken.

Britten! habt sie aufgefasst:
'Thätigen Sinn, das Thun gezügelt;
Stetig Streben ohne Hast;'
Und so wollt Ihrs denn besiegelt!

"*Weimar, d. 28ten August* 1831. GOETHE."'

(*Fraser's Magazine*, xxii. 447.)

And thus, as it chanced, was the poet's *last* birthday celebrated by an outward ceremony of a peculiar kind; wherein too, it is to be hoped, might lie some inward meaning and sincerity.

as the highest man of his time, but as a man of universal Time, important for all generations,—one of the landmarks in the History of Men.

Thus, from our point of view, does Goethe rise on us as the Uniter, and victorious Reconciler, of the distracted, clashing elements of the most distracted and divided age that the world has witnessed since the Introduction of the Christian Religion; to which old chatoic Era, of world-confusion and world-*re*-fusion, of blackest darkness, succeeded by a dawn of light and nobler 'dayspring from on high,' this wondrous Era of ours is, indeed, oftenest likened. To the faithful heart let no era be a desperate one! It is ever the nature of Darkness to be followed by a new nobler Light; nay to produce such. The woes and contradictions of an Atheistic time; of a world sunk in wickedness and baseness and unbelief, wherein also physical wretchedness, the disorganisation and broken-heartedness of whole classes struggling in ignorance and pain will not fail: all this, the view of all this, falls like a Sphinx-question on every new-born earnest heart, a life-and-death entanglement for every earnest heart to deliver itself from, and the world from. Of Wisdom cometh Strength: only when there is 'no vision' do the people perish. But, by natural vicissitude, the age of *Persiflage* goes out, and that of earnest unconquerable Endeavour must come in: for the ashes of the old fire will not warm men anew; the new generation is too desolate to indulge in mockery,—unless, perhaps, in bitter suicidal mockery of itself! Thus after Voltaires enough have laughed and sniffed at what is false, appear some Turgots to ask what is true. Woe to the land where, in these seasons, no prophet arises; but only censors, satirists and embittered desperadoes, to make the evil worse; at best but to accelerate a consummation, which in accelerating they have aggravated! Old Europe had its Tacitus and Juvenal; but these availed not. New Europe too has had its Mirabeaus, and Byrons, and Napoleons, and innumerable red-flaming meteors, shaking pestilence from their hair; and earthquakes and deluges and Chaos come again; but the clear Star, day's harbinger (*Phosphoros*, the bringer of *light*), had not yet been recognised.

That in Goethe there lay Force to educe reconcilement out of such contradiction as man is now born into, marks him as the Strong One of his time; the true *Earl*, though now with quite other weapons than those old steel *Jarls* were used to! Such reconcilement of contradictions, indeed, is the task of every man: the weakest reconciles somewhat; reduces old chaotic elements into new higher order; ever, according to faculty and endeavour, brings good out of evil. Consider now what faculty and endeavour must belong to the highest of such tasks, which virtually includes all others whatsoever! The thing that was given this man to reconcile (to begin reconciling and teach us how to reconcile), was the inward spiritual chaos; the centre of all other confusions, outward and inward: he was to close the Abyss out of which such manifold destruction, moral, intellectual, social, was proceeding.

The greatness of his Endowment, manifested in such a work, has long been plain to all men. That it belongs to the highest class of human endowments, entitling the wearer thereof, who so nobly used it, to the appellation, in its strictest sense, of Great Man,—is also becoming plain. A giant strength of Character is to be traced here; mild and kindly and calm, even as strength ever is. In the midst of so much spasmodic Byronism, bellowing till its windpipe is cracked, how very different looks *this* symptom of strength: 'He appeared to aim at pushing away from him everything that did not hang upon his individual will.' 'In his own imperturbable firmness of character, he had grown into the habit of *never contradicting any one.* On the contrary, he listened with a friendly air to every one's opinion, and would himself elucidate and strengthen it by instances and reasons of his own. All who did not know him fancied that he thought as they did; for he was possessed of a preponderating intellect, and could transport himself into the mental state of any man, and imitate his manner of conceiving.'[1] Beloved brethren, who wish to be strong! Had not the man, who could take this smooth method of it more strength in him than any teeth-grinding, glass-eyed 'lone Caloyer' you have yet fallen-

[1] *Wilhelm Meister*, book vi.

in with? Consider your ways; consider, first, whether you cannot do with being *weak!* If the answer still prove negative, consider, secondly, what strength actually is, and where you are to try for it. A certain strong man, of former time, fought stoutly at Lepanto; worked stoutly as Algerine slave; stoutly delivered himself from such working; with stout cheerfulness endured famine and nakedness and the world's ingratitude; and, sitting in jail, with the one arm left him, wrote our joyfullest, and all but our deepest, modern book, and named it *Don Quixote:* this was a genuine strong man. A strong man, of recent time, fights little for any good cause anywhere; works weakly as an English lord; weakly delivers himself from such working; with weak despondency endures the cackling of plucked geese at St. James's; and, sitting in sunny Italy, in his coach-and-four, at a distance of two thousand miles from them, writes, over many reams of paper, the following sentence, with variations: *Saw ever the world one greater or unhappier?* This was a sham strong man. Choose ye.—

Of Goethe's spiritual Endowment, looked at on the Intellectual side, we have (as indeed lies in the nature of things, for moral and intellectual are fundamentally one and the same) to pronounce a similar opinion; that it is great among the very greatest. As the first gift of all, may be discerned here utmost Clearness, all-piercing faculty of Vision; whereto, as we ever find it, all other gifts are superadded; nay, properly they are but other forms of the same gift. A nobler power of insight than this of Goethe you in vain look for, since Shakspeare passed away. In fact, there is much every way, here in particular, that these two minds have in common. Shakspeare too does not look *at* a thing, but into it, through it; so that he constructively comprehends it, can take it asunder, and put it together again; the thing melts, as it were, into light under his eye, and anew *creates* itself before him. That is to say, he is a Thinker in the highest of all senses: he is a Poet. For Goethe, as for Shakspeare, the world lies all translucent, all *fusible* we might call it, encircled with WONDER; the Natural in reality the Supernatural, for to

the seer's eyes both become one. What are the *Hamlets* and *Tempests*, the *Fausts* and *Mignons*, but glimpses accorded us into this translucent, wonder-encircled world ; revelations of the mystery of all mysteries, Man's Life as it actually is?

Under other secondary aspects, the poetical faculty of the two will still be found cognate. Goethe is full of *figurativeness ;* this grand light-giving Intellect, as all such are, is an imaginative one,—and in a quite other sense than most of our unhappy Imaginatives will imagine. Gall the Craniologist declared him to be a born *Volksredner* (popular orator), both by the figure of his brow, and what was still more decisive, because 'he could not speak but a figure came.' Gall saw what was high as his own nose reached,

> High as the nose doth reach, all clear!
> What higher lies, they ask: Is it here?

A far different figurativeness was this of Goethe than popular oratory has work for. In figures of the popular-oratory kind, Goethe, throughout his Writings at least, is nowise the most copious man known to us, though on a stricter scrutiny we may find him the richest. Of your ready-made, coloured-paper metaphors, such as can be sewed or plastered on the surface, by way of giving an ornamental finish to the rag-web already woven, we speak not ; there is not one such to be discovered in all his Works. But even in the use of genuine metaphors, which are not haberdashery ornament, but the genuine new vesture of new thoughts, he yields to lower men (for example to Jean Paul) ; that is to say, in fact, he is more master of the *common* language, and can oftener make *it* serve him. Goethe's figurativeness lies in the very centre of his being ; manifests itself as the constructing of the inward elements of a thought, as the *vital* embodiment of it : such figures as those of Goethe you will look for through all modern literature, and except here and there in Shakspeare, nowhere find a trace of. Again, it is the same faculty in higher exercise, that enables the poet to construct a Character. Here too Shakspeare and Goethe, unlike innumerable others, are

vital; their construction begins at the *heart* and flows outward as the life-streams do; fashioning the *surface*, as it were, spontaneously. Those Macbeths and Falstaffs, accordingly, these Fausts and Philinas have a verisimilitude and life that separates them from all other fictions of late ages. All others, in comparison, have more or less the nature of hollow vizards, constructed from without inwards, painted *like*, and deceptively put in motion. Many years ago on finishing our first perusal of *Wilhelm Meister*, with a very mixed sentiment in other respects, we could not but feel that here lay more insight into the elements of human nature, and a more poetically perfect combining of these, than in all the other fictitious literature of our generation.

Neither, as an additional similarity (for the great is ever like itself), let the majestic Calmness of both be omitted; their perfect tolerance for all men and all things. This too proceeds from the same source, perfect clearness of vision: he who comprehends an object cannot hate it, has already begun to love it. In respect of style, no less than of character, this calmness and graceful smooth-flowing softness is again characteristic of both; though in Goethe the quality is more complete, having been matured by far more assiduous study. Goethe's style is perhaps to be reckoned the most excellent that our modern world, in any language, can exhibit. 'Even to a foreigner,' says one, 'it is full of character and secondary meanings; polished, yet vernacular and cordial, it sounds like the dialect of wise, antique-minded, true-hearted men: in poetry, brief, sharp, simple and expressive: in prose, perhaps, still more pleasing; for it is at once concise and full, rich, clear, unpretending and melodious; and the sense, not presented in alternating flashes, piece after piece revealed and withdrawn, rises before us as in continuous dawning, and stands at last simultaneously complete, and bathed in the mellowest and ruddiest sunshine. It brings to mind what the prose of 'Hooker, Bacon, Milton, Browne, would have been, had they written under the good without the bad influences of that French precision, which has polished and attenuated, trimmed and impoverished all modern lan-

guages; made our meaning clear, and too often shallow as well as clear.'

Finally, as Shakspeare is to be considered as the greater nature of the two, so on the other hand we must admit him to have been the less cultivated, and much the more careless. What Shakspeare *could* have done we nowhere discover. A careless mortal, open to the Universe and its influences, not caring strenuously to open himself; who, Prometheus-like, will scale Heaven (if it so must be), and is satisfied if he therewith pay the rent of his London Playhouse; who, had the Warwickshire Justice let him hunt deer unmolested, might, for many years more, have lived quiet on the green earth without such aërial journeys: an unparalleled mortal. In the great Goethe, again, we see a man through life at his utmost strain; a man who, as he says himself, 'struggled toughly;' laid hold of all things, under all aspects, scientific or poetic; engaged passionately with the deepest interests of man's existence, in the most complex age of man's history. What Shakspeare's thoughts on 'God, Nature, Art,' would have been, especially had he lived to number fourscore years, were curious to know: Goethe's, delivered in many-toned melody, as the apocalypse of our era, are here for us to know.

Such was the noble talent entrusted to this man; such the noble employment he made thereof. We can call him, once more, 'a clear and universal man;' we can say that, in his universality, as thinker, as singer, as worker, he lived a life of antique nobleness under these new conditions; and, in so living, is alone in all Europe; the foremost, whom others are to learn from and follow. In which great act, or rather great sum-total of many acts, who shall compute what treasure of new strengthening, of faith become hope and vision, lies secured for all! The question, Can man still live in devoutness, yet without blindness or contraction; in unconquerable steadfastness for the right, yet without tumultuous exasperation against the wrong; as an antique worthy, yet with the expansion and increased endowment of a modern? is no longer

a question, but has become a certainty, and ocularly-visible fact.

We have looked at Goethe, as we engaged to do, 'on *this* side,' and with the eyes of 'this generation;' that is to say, chiefly as a world-changer, and benignant spiritual revolutionist: for in our present so astonishing condition of 'progress of the species,' such is the category under which we must try all things, wisdom itself. And, indeed, under this aspect too, Goethe's Life and Works are doubtless of incalculable value, and worthy our most earnest study: for his Spiritual History is, as it were, the ideal emblem of all true men's in these days; the goal of Manhood, which he attained, we too in our degree have to aim at; let us mark well the road he fashioned for himself, and in the dim weltering chaos rejoice to find a paved way.

Here, moreover, another word of explanation is perhaps worth adding. We mean, in regard to the controversy agitated (as about many things pertaining to Goethe) about his Political creed and practice, Whether he was Ministerial or in Opposition? Let the political admirer of Goethe be at ease: Goethe was both, and also neither! The 'rotten white-washed (*gebrechliche übertünchte*) condition of society' was plainer to few eyes than to his, sadder to few hearts than to his. Listen to the Epigrammatist at Venice:

> To this stithy I liken the land, the hammer its ruler,
> And the people that plate, beaten between them that writhes:
> Woe to the plate, when nothing but wilful bruises on bruises
> Hit it at random; and made, cometh no Kettle to view!

But, alas, what is to be done?

> No Apostle-of-Liberty much to my heart ever found I;
> License, each for himself, this was at bottom their want.
> Liberator of many! first dare to be Servant of many:
> What a business is that, wouldst thou know it, go try!

Let the following also be recommended to all inordinate worshippers of Septennials, Triennials, Elective Franchise, and the Shameful Parts of the Constitution; and let each be a

little tolerant of his neighbour's 'festoon,' and rejoice that he has himself found out *Freedom*,—a thing much wanted.

> Walls I can see tumbled down, walls I see also a-building;
> Here sit prisoners, there likewise do prisoners sit:
> Is the world then itself a huge prison? Free only the madman,
> His chains knitting still up into some graceful festoon?

So that, for the Poet, what remains but to leave Conservative and Destructive pulling one another's locks and ears off, as they will and can (the ulterior issue being long since indubitable enough); and for his own part, strive day and night to forward the small suffering remnant of *Productives;* of those who, in true manful endeavour, were it under despotism or under sansculottism, create somewhat, with whom alone, in the end, does the hope of the world lie? Go thou and do likewise! Art thou *called* to politics, work therein, as this man would have done, like a real and not an imaginary workman. Understand well, meanwhile, that to no man is his political constitution 'a life, but only a house wherein his life is led:' and hast thou a nobler task than such *house*-pargeting and smoke-doctoring, and pulling down of ancient rotten rat-inhabited walls, leave such to the proper craftsman; honour the higher Artist, and good-humouredly say with him:

> All this is neither my coat nor my cake,
> Why fill my hand with other men's charges?
> The fishes swim at ease in the lake,
> And take no thought of the barges.

Goethe's political practice, or rather no-practice, except that of self-defence, is a part of his conduct quite inseparably coherent with the rest; a thing we could recommend to universal study, that the spirit of it might be understood by all men, and by all men imitated.

Nevertheless, it is nowise alone on this revolutionary or 'progress-of-the-species' side that Goethe has significance; his Life and Work is no painted show but a solid reality, and may be looked at with profit on all sides, from all imaginable points of view. Perennial, as a possession forever, Goethe's

History and Writings abide there ; a thousand-voiced 'Melody of Wisdom,' which he that has ears may hear. What the experience of the most complexly-situated, deep-searching, everyway *far-experienced* man has yielded him of insight, lies written for all men here. He who was of compass to know and feel more than any other man, this is the record of his knowledge and feeling. 'The deepest heart, the highest head to scan,' was not beyond his faculty ; thus, then, did he scan and interpret : let many generations listen, according to their want ; let the generation which has no need of listening, and nothing new to learn there, esteem itself a happy one.

To us, meanwhile, to all that wander in darkness and seek light, as the one thing needful, be this possession reckoned among our choicest blessings and distinctions. *Colite talem virum ;* learn of him, imitate, emulate him ! So did *he* catch the Music of the Universe, and unfold it into clearness, and in authentic celestial tones bring it home to the hearts of men, from amid that soul-confusing Babylonish hubbub of this our new Tower-of-Babel era ! For now too, as in that old time, had men said to themselves : Come, let us build a tower which shall reach to heaven ; and by our steam-engines, and logic-engines, and skilful mechanism and manipulation, vanquish not only Physical Nature, but the divine Spirit of Nature, and scale the empyrean itself. Wherefore they must needs again be stricken with confusion of tongues (or of printing-presses) ; and *dispersed,*—to other work ; wherein also, let us hope, their hammers and trowels shall better avail them.—

Of Goethe, with a feeling such as can be due to no other man, we now take farewell. *Vixit, vivit.*

CORN-LAW RHYMES.

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CORN-LAW RHYMES.

Smelfungus's despair at the present condition of Poetry: The end having come, it is fit that we end. (p. 67).—And yet, if the whole welkin hang overcast in drizzly dinginess, the feeblest speck of blue will not be unwelcome. The Corn-Law Rhymer, one of that singular class who really have something to say; he has *believed*, and therefore is again believable. A Sheffield Worker in brass and iron; but no 'Uneducated Poet,' such as dilettante patronage delights to foster. A less misfortune, in these strange days, to be trained among the Uneducated classes, than among the Educated: Few Great Men ever nursed with any conscious eye to their vocation. In the poorest cottage are Books, is One Book, with an interpreting response to whatever is Deepest in man. Shakspeare's Learning: The grand schoolmaster is Practice,—Work. Unspeakable advantages of uneducated Working classes, over educated Unworking. (75).—The Corn-Law Rhymer's sturdy, defiant attitude: An earnest, truth-speaking, *genuine* man. Strong and beautiful thoughts not wanting in him. A life of painfulness, toil, insecurity, scarcity; yet he fronts it like a man: Affection dwells with Danger, all the holier for the stern environment. Not as a rebel does he stand; yet as a free man, spokesman of free men, not far from rebelling against much. He feels deeply the frightful condition of our entire Social Affairs; and sees in Bread-tax the summary of all our evils. The black colours of his Life do not hide from him that God's world, if made into a House of Imprisonment, can also be a House of Prayer. The primary idea of all Poetry, Time resting on Eternity. Errors and shortcomings. He has looked, unblinded, into the prophetic Book of Existence, and read many little passages there: The Poor Grinder; the Poacher; the Workman's Sabbath. (87).—The Workhouse, the bourne whither all these actors and Workers are tragically bound: Must it then grow worse and worse, till the last brave heart is broken in England? All Reform except a moral one unavailing. The Rhapsody of 'Enoch Wray,' an inarticulate, half-audible Epic; a blind aged man, himself a ruin, encircled with the ruin of a whole Era. To the Working portion of the Aristocracy, such a Voice from their humble working Brother will be both welcome and instructive: To the Idle portion it may be unwelcome enough. The case of Balaam the son of Beor: Balaam's occupation gone. A parting word of admonition: Poetry, or Prose? The Socrates'-Demon, such as dwells in every mortal. The Corn-Law Rhymer already a king, even more than many now crowned as such. (95).

CORN-LAW RHYMES.[1]

[1832.]

Smelfungus Redivivus, throwing down his critical assaying balance, some years ago, and taking leave of the Belles-Lettres function, expressed himself in this abrupt way: 'The end having come, it is fit that we end. Poetry having ceased to be read, or published, or written, how can it continue to be reviewed? With your Lake Schools, and Border-Thief Schools, and Cockney and Satanic Schools, there has been enough to do; and now, all these Schools having burnt or smouldered themselves out, and left nothing but a wide-spread wreck of ashes, dust and cinders,—or perhaps dying embers, kicked to and fro under the feet of innumerable women and children in the Magazines, and at best blown here and there into transient sputters, with vapour enough, so as to form what you might name a boundless Green-sick, or New-Sentimental, or Sleep-Awake School,—what remains but to adjust ourselves to circumstances? Urge me not,' continues the able Editor, suddenly changing his figure, 'with considerations that Poetry, as the inward voice of Life, must be perennial, only dead in one form to become alive in another; that this still abundant deluge of Metre, seeing there must needs be fractions of Poetry floating scattered in it, ought still to be net-fished,

[1] Edinburgh Review, No. 110.—1. Corn-Law Rhymes. Third Edition. 8vo. London, 1831.

2. Love; a Poem. By the Author of Corn-Law Rhymes. Third Edition. 8vo. London, 1831.

3. The Village Patriarch; a Poem. By the Author of Corn-Law Rhymes. 12mo. London, 1831.

at all events surveyed and taken note of: the survey of English Metre, at this epoch, perhaps transcends the human faculties; to hire-out the reading of it, by estimate, at a remunerative rate per page, would, in few Quarters, reduce the cash-box of any extant Review to the verge of insolvency.'

What our distinguished contemporary has said remains said. Far be it from us to censure or counsel any able Editor; to draw aside the Editorial veil, and, officiously prying into his interior mysteries, impugn the laws he walks by! For Editors, as for others, there are times of perplexity, wherein the cunning of the wisest will scantily suffice his own wants, to say nothing of his neighbour's.

To us, on our side, meanwhile, it remains clear that Poetry, or were it but Metre, should nowise be altogether neglected. Surely it is the Reviewer's trade to sit watching, not only the tillage, crop-rotation, marketings and good or evil husbandry of the Economic Earth, but also the weather-symptoms of the Literary Heaven, on which those former so much depend: if any promising or threatening meteoric phenomenon make its appearance, and he proclaim not tidings thereof, it is at his peril. Further, be it considered how, in this singular poetic epoch, a small matter constitutes a novelty. If the whole welkin hang overcast in drizzly dinginess, the feeblest light-gleam, or speck of blue, cannot pass unheeded.

The Works of this Corn-Law Rhymer we might liken rather to some little fraction of a rainbow: hues of joy and harmony, painted out of troublous tears. No round full bow, indeed; gloriously spanning the heavens; shone on by the full sun; and, with seven-striped, gold-crimson border (as is in some sort the office of Poetry) dividing Black from Brilliant: not such; alas, still far from it! Yet, in very truth, a little prismatic blush, glowing genuine among the wet clouds; which proceeds, if you will, from a sun cloud-hidden, yet indicates that a sun does shine, and above those vapours, a whole azure vault and celestial firmament stretch serene.

Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that here we have once more got sight of a Book calling itself Poetry, yet which actually is a kind of Book, and no empty pasteboard

Case, and simulacrum or 'ghost-defunct' of a Book, such as is too often palmed on the world, and handed over Booksellers' counters, with a demand of real money for it, as if it too were a reality. The speaker here is of that singular class who have something to say; whereby, though delivering himself in verse, and in these days, he does not deliver himself wholly in jargon, but articulately, and with a certain degree of meaning, that has been *believed*, and therefore is again believable.

To some the wonder and interest will be heightened by another circumstance: that the speaker in question is not school-learned, or even furnished with pecuniary capital; is, indeed, a quite unmoneyed, russet coated speaker; nothing or little other than a Sheffield worker in brass and iron, who describes himself as 'one of the lower, little removed above the lowest class.' Be of what class he may, the man is provided, as we can perceive, with a rational god-created soul; which too has fashioned itself into some clearness, some self-subsistence, and can actually see and know with its own organs; and in rugged substantial English, nay with tones of poetic melody, utter forth what it has seen.

It used to be said that lions do not paint, that poor men do not write; but the case is altering now. Here is a voice coming from the deep Cyclopean forges, where Labour, in real soot and sweat, beats with his thousand hammers 'the red son of the furnace;' doing personal battle with Necessity, and her dark brute Powers, to make them reasonable and serviceable; an intelligible voice from the hitherto Mute and Irrational, to tell us at first hand how it is with him, what in very deed is the theorem of the world and of himself, which he, in those dim depths of his, in that wearied head of his, has put together. To which voice, in several respects significant enough, let good ear be given.

Here too be it premised, that nowise under the category of 'Uneducated Poets,' or in any fashion of dilettante patronage, can our Sheffield friend be produced. His position is unsuitable for that: so is ours. Genius, which the French lady declared to be of no sex, is much more certainly of no rank; neither when 'the spark of Nature's fire' has been imparted,

should Education take high airs in her artificial light,—which is too often but phosphorescence and putrescence. In fact, it now begins to be suspected here and there, that this same aristocratic recognition, which looks down with an obliging smile from its throne, of bound Volumes and gold Ingots, and admits that it is wonderfully well for one of the uneducated classes, may be getting out of place. There are unhappy times in the world's history, when he that is the least educated will chiefly have to say that he is the least perverted; and with the multitude of false eye-glasses, convex, concave, green, even yellow, has not lost the natural use of his eyes. For a generation that reads Cobbett's Prose, and Burns's Poetry, it need be no miracle that here also is a man who can handle both pen and hammer like a man.

Nevertheless, this serene-highness attitude and temper is so frequent, perhaps it were good to turn the tables for a moment, and see what look it has under that reverse aspect. How were it if we surmised, that for a man gifted with natural vigour, with a man's character to be developed in him, more especially if in the way of Literature, as Thinker and Writer, it is actually, in these strange days, no special misfortune to be trained up among the Uneducated classes, and not among the Educated; but rather of two misfortunes the smaller?

For all men doubtless obstructions abound; spiritual growth must be hampered and stunted and has to struggle through with difficulty, if it do not wholly stop. We may grant too that, for a mediocre character, the continual training and tutoring, from language-masters, dancing-masters, posture-masters of all sorts, hired and volunteer, which a high rank in any time and country assures, there will be produced a certain superiority, or at worst, air of superiority over the corresponding mediocre character of low rank: thus we perceive the vulgar Do-nothing, as contrasted with the vulgar Drudge, is in general a much prettier man; with a wider, perhaps clearer outlook into the distance; in innumerable superficial matters, however it may be when we go deeper, he has a manifest advantage. But with the man of uncommon

character, again, in whom a germ of irrepressible Force has been implanted, and *will* unfold itself into some sort of freedom, altogether the reverse may hold. For such germs too, there is, undoubtedly enough, a proper soil where they will grow best, and an improper one where they will grow worst. True also, where there is a will, there is a way, where a genius has been given, a possibility, a certainty of its growing is also given. Yet often it seems as if the injudicious gardening and manuring were worse than none at all; and killed what the inclemencies of blind chance would have spared. We find accordingly that few Fredericks or Napoleons, indeed none since the Great Alexander, who unfortunately drank himself to death too soon for proving what lay in him, were nursed up with an eye to their vocation: mostly with an eye quite the other way, in the midst of isolation and pain, destitution and contradiction. Nay in our own times, have we not seen two men of genius, a Byron and a Burns; they both, by mandate of Nature, struggle and must struggle towards clear Manhood, stormfully enough, for the space of six-and-thirty years; yet only the gifted Ploughman can partially prevail therein: the gifted Peer must toil and strive, and shoot-out in wild efforts, yet die at last in Boyhood, with the promise of his Manhood still but announcing itself in the distance. Truly, as was once written, 'it is only the artichoke that will not grow except in gardens; the acorn is cast carelessly abroad into the wilderness, yet on the wild soil it nourishes itself, and rises to be an oak.' All woodmen, moreover, will tell you that fat manure is the ruin of your oak; likewise that the thinner and wilder your soil, the tougher, more iron-textured is your timber,—though unhappily also the smaller. So too with the spirits of men: they become pure from their errors, by suffering for them; he who has battled, were it only with Poverty and hard toil, will be found stronger, more expert, than he who could stay at home from the battle, concealed among the Provision-wagons, or even not unwatchfully 'abiding by the stuff.' In which sense, an observer, not without experience of our time, has said: Had I a man of clearly developed character (clear, sincere within its limits), of in-

sight, courage and real applicable force of head and of heart, to search for; and not a man of luxuriously distorted character, with haughtiness for courage, and for insight and applicable force, speculation and plausible show of force,—it were rather among the lower than among the higher classes that I should look for him.

A hard saying, indeed, seems this same: that he, whose other wants were all beforehand supplied; to whose capabilities no problem was presented except even this, How to cultivate them to best advantage, should attain less real culture than he whose first grand problem and obligation was nowise spiritual culture, but hard labour for his daily bread! Sad enough must the perversion be where preparations of such magnitude issue in abortion; and so sumptuous an Art with all its appliances can accomplish nothing, not so much as necessitous Nature would of herself have supplied! Nevertheless, so pregnant is Life with evil as with good; to such height in an age rich, plethorically overgrown with means, can means be accumulated in the wrong place, and immeasurably aggravate wrong tendencies, instead of righting them, this sad and strange result may actually turn out to have been realized.

But what, after all, is meant by *uneducated*, in a time when Books have come into the world; come to be household furniture in every habitation of the civilized world? In the poorest cottage are Books; is one Book, wherein for several thousands of years the spirit of man has found light, and nourishment, and an interpreting response to whatever is Deepest in him; wherein still, to this day, for the eye that will look well, the Mystery of Existence reflects itself, if not resolved, yet revealed, and prophetically emblemed; if not to the satisfying of the outward sense, yet to the opening of the inward sense, which is the far grander result. 'In Books lie the creative Phœnix-ashes of the whole Past.' All that men have devised, discovered, done, felt or imagined, lies recorded in Books; wherein whoso has learned the mystery of spelling printed letters, may find it, and appropriate it.

Nay, what indeed is all this? As if it were by universities and libraries and lecture-rooms, that man's Education, what

we can call Education, were accomplished ; solely, or mainly, by instilling the dead letter and record of other men's Force, that the living Force of a new man were to be awakened, enkindled and purified into victorious clearness! Foolish Pedant, that sittest there compassionately descanting on the Learning of Shakspeare ! Shakspeare had penetrated into innumerable things ; far into Nature with her divine Splendours and infernal Terrors, her Ariel Melodies, and mystic mandragora Moans ; far into man's workings with Nature, into man's Art and Artifice ; Shakspeare knew (*kenned*, which in those days still partially meant *can-ned*) innumerable things ; what men are, and what the world is, and how and what men aim at there, from the Dame Quickly of modern Eastcheap to the Cæsar of ancient Rome, over many countries, over many centuries: of all this he had the clearest understanding and constructive comprehension ; all this was his Learning and Insight ; what now is thine? Insight into none of those things ; perhaps, strictly considered, into no thing whatever: solely into thy own sheepskin diplomas, fat academic honours, into vocables and alphabetic letters, and but a little way into these !—The grand result of schooling is a mind with just vision to discern, with free force to do : the grand schoolmaster is Practice.

And now, when *kenning* and *can-ning* have become two altogether different words ; and this, the first principle of human culture, the foundation-stone of all but false imaginary culture, that men must, before every other thing, be trained to *do* somewhat, has been, for some generations, laid quietly on the shelf, with such result as we see,—consider what advantage those same uneducated Working classes have over the educated Unworking classes, in one particular ; herein, namely, that they must *work*. To work ! What incalculable sources of cultivation lie in that process, in that attempt ; how it lays hold of the whole man, not of a small theoretical calculating fraction of him, but of the whole practical, doing and daring and enduring man ; thereby to awaken dormant faculties, root-out old errors, at every step! He that has done nothing has known nothing. Vain is it to sit scheming and plausibly

discoursing: up and be doing! If thy knowledge be real, put it forth from thee: grapple with real Nature; try thy theories there, and see how they hold out. *Do* one thing, for the first time in thy life do a thing; a new light will rise to thee on the doing of all things whatsoever. Truly, a boundless significance lies in work; whereby the humblest craftsman comes to attain much, which is of indispensable use, but which he who is of no craft, were he never so high, runs the risk of missing. Once turn to Practice, Error and Truth will no longer consort together: the result of Error involves you in the square-root of a negative quantity; try to *extract* that, to extract any earthly substance or sustenance from that! The honourable Member can discover that 'there is a reaction,' and believe it, and wearisomely reason on it, in spite of all men, while he so pleases, for still his wine and his oil will not fail him: but the sooty Brazier, who discovered that brass was green-cheese, has to act on his discovery; finds therefore, that, singular as it may seem, brass cannot be masticated for dinner, green-cheese will not beat into fire-proof dishes; that such discovery, therefore, has no legs to stand on, and must even be let fall. Now, take this principle of difference through the entire lives of two men, and calculate what it will amount to! Necessity, moreover, which we here see as the mother of Accuracy, is well known as the mother of Invention. He who wants everything, must know many things, do many things, to procure even a few: different enough with him, whose indispensable knowledge is this only, that a finger will pull the bell!

So that, for all men who live, we may conclude, this Life of Man is a school, wherein the naturally foolish will continue foolish though you bray him in a mortar, but the naturally wise will gather wisdom under every disadvantage. What, meanwhile, must be the condition of an Era, when the highest advantages there become perverted into drawbacks; when, if you take two men of genius, and put the one between the handles of a plough, and mount the other between the painted coronets of a coach-and-four, and bid them both move along, the former shall arrive a Burns, the latter a

Byron: two men of talent, and put the one into a Printer's chapel, full of lamp-black, tyrannous usage, hard toil, and the other into Oxford universities, with lexicons and libraries, and hired expositors and sumptuous endowments, the former shall come out a Dr. Franklin, the latter a Dr. Parr!—

However, we are not here to write an Essay on Education, or sing *misereres* over a 'world in its dotage;' but simply to say that our Corn-Law Rhymer, educated or uneducated as Nature and Art have made him, asks not the smallest patronage or compassion for his rhymes, professes not the smallest contrition for them. Nowise in such attitude does he present himself; not supplicatory, deprecatory, but sturdy, defiant, almost menacing. Wherefore, indeed, should he supplicate or deprecate? It is out of the abundance of the heart that he has spoken; praise or blame cannot make it truer or falser than it already is. By the grace of God this man is sufficient for himself; by his skill in metallurgy, can beat out a toilsome but a manful living, go how it may; has arrived too at that singular audacity of believing what he knows, and acting on it, or writing on it, or thinking on it, without leave asked of any one: there shall he stand, and work, with head and with hand, for himself and the world; blown about by no wind of doctrine; frightened at no Reviewer's shadow; having, in his time, looked substances enough in the face, and remained unfrightened.

What is left, therefore, but to take what he brings, and as he brings it? Let us be thankful, were it only for the day of small things. Something it is that we have lived to welcome once more a sweet Singer wearing the likeness of a Man. In humble guise, it is true, and of stature more or less marred in its development; yet not without a genial robustness, strength and valour built on honesty and love; on the whole, a genuine man, with somewhat of the eye and speech and bearing that beseems a man. To whom all other genuine men, how different soever in subordinate particulars, can gladly hold out the right hand of fellowship.

The great excellence of our Rhymer, be it understood then,

we take to consist even in this, often hinted at already, that he is *genuine*. Here is an earnest, truth-speaking man; no theoriser, sentimentaliser, but a practical man of work and endeavour, man of sufferance and endurance. The thing that he speaks is not a hearsay, but a thing which he has himself known, and by experience become assured of. He has used his eyes for seeing; uses his tongue for declaring what he has seen. His voice, therefore, among the many noises of our Planet, will deserve its place better than the most; will be well worth some attention. Whom else should we attend to but such? The man who speaks with some half shadow of a Belief, and supposes, and inclines to think; and considers not with undivided soul, what is true, but only what is plausible, and will find audience and recompense: do we not meet him at every street-turning, on all highways and byways; is he not stale, unprofitable, ineffectual, wholly grown a weariness of the flesh? So rare is his opposite in any rank of Literature, or of Life, so very rare, that even in the lowest he is precious. The authentic insight and experience of any human soul, were it but insight and experience in hewing of wood and drawing of water, is real knowledge, a real possession and acquirement, how small soever: *palabra*, again, were it a supreme pontiff's, is wind merely, and nothing, or less than nothing. To a considerable degree, this man, we say, has worked himself loose from cant, and conjectural halfness, idle pretences and hallucinations, into a condition of Sincerity. Wherein, perhaps, as above argued, his hard social environment, and fortune to be 'a workman born,' which brought so many other retardations with it, may have forwarded and accelerated him.

That a man, Workman or Idleman, encompassed, as in these days, with persons in a state of willing or unwilling Insincerity, and necessitated, as man is, to learn whatever he does traditionally learn by *imitating* these, should nevertheless shake off Insincerity, and struggle out from that dim pestiferous marsh-atmosphere, into a clearer and purer height,—betokens in him a certain Originality; in which rare gift, force of all kinds is presupposed. To our Rhymer, accordingly, as hinted more than once, vision and determination have not

been denied: a rugged, homegrown understanding is in him; whereby, in his own way, he has mastered this and that, and looked into various things, in general honestly and to purpose, sometimes deeply, piercingly and with a Seer's eye. Strong thoughts are not wanting, beautiful thoughts; strong and beautiful expressions of thought. As traceable, for instance, in this new illustration of an old argument, the mischief of Commercial Restrictions:

> These, O ye quacks, these are your remedies:
> Alms for the Rich, a bread-tax for the Poor!
> Soul-purchased harvests on the indigent moor!—
> Thus the winged victor of a hundred fights,
> The warrior Ship, bows low her banner'd head,
> When through her planks the seaborn reptile bites
> Its deadly way;—and sinks in Ocean's bed,
> Vanquish'd by worms. What then? The worms were fed.
> Will not God smite thee black, thou whited wall?
> Thy life is lawless, and thy law a lie,
> Or Nature is a dream unnatural:
> Look on the clouds, the streams, the earth, the sky;
> Lo, all is interchange and harmony!
> Where is the gorgeous pomp which, yester morn,
> Curtain'd yon Orb with amber, fold on fold?
> Behold it in the blue of Rivelin, borne
> To feed the all-feeding sea! The molten gold
> Is flowing pale in Loxley's waters cold,
> To kindle into beauty tree and flower,
> And wake to verdant life hill, vale and plain.
> Cloud trades with river, and exchange is power:
> But should the clouds, the streams, the winds disdain
> Harmonious intercourse, nor dew nor rain
> Would forest-crown the mountains; airless day
> Would blast on Kinderscout the heathy glow;
> No purply green would meeken into gray
> O'er Don at eve; no sound of river's flow
> Disturb the Sepulchre of all below.

Nature and the doings of men have not passed by this man unheeded, like the endless cloud-rack in dull weather; or lightly heeded, like a theatric phantasmagoria; but earnestly inquired into, like a thing of reality; reverently loved and worshipped, as a thing with divine significance in its reality,

glimpses of which divineness he has caught and laid to heart. For his vision, as was said, partakes of the genuinely Poetical; he is not a Rhymer and Speaker only, but, in some genuine sense, something of a Poet.

Farther, we must admit him, what indeed is already herein admitted, to be, if clear-sighted, also brave-hearted. A troublous element is his; a Life of painfulness, toil, insecurity, scarcity; yet he fronts it like a man; yields not to it, tames it into some subjection, some order; its wild fearful dinning and tumult, as of a devouring Chaos, becomes a sort of wild war-music for him; wherein too are passages of beauty, of melodious melting softness, of lightness and briskness, even of joy. The stout heart is also a warm and kind one; Affection dwells with Danger, all the holier and the lovelier for such stern environment. A working man is this; yet, as we said, a man: in his sort, a courageous, much-loving, faithfully enduring and endeavouring man.

What such a one, so gifted and so placed, shall say to a Time like ours; how he will fashion himself into peace, or war, or armed neutrality, with the world and his fellow-men; and work out his course in joy and grief, in victory and defeat, is a question worth asking: which in these three little Volumes partly receives answer. He has turned, as all thinkers up to a very high and rare order in these days must do, into Politics; is a Reformer, at least a stern Complainer, Radical to the core: his poetic melody takes an elegiaco-tragical character; much of him is converted into hostility, and grim, hardly-suppressed indignation, such as right long denied, hope long deferred, may awaken in the kindliest heart. Not yet as a rebel against anything does he stand; but as a free man, and the spokesman of free men, not far from rebelling against much; with sorrowful appealing dew, yet also with incipient lightning, in his eyes; whom it were not desirable to provoke into rebellion. He says in Vulcanic dialect, his feelings have been *hammered* till they are *cold-short;* so they will no longer bend; 'they snap, and fly off,'—in the face of the hammerer. Not unnatural, though lamentable! Nevertheless, under all disguises of the Radical, the

Poet is still recognisable: a certain music breathes through all dissonances, as the prophecy and ground-tone of returning harmony; the man, as we said, is of a poetical nature.

To his Political Philosophy there is perhaps no great importance attachable. He feels, as all men that live must do, the disorganisation, and hard-grinding, unequal pressure of the Social Affairs; but sees into it only a very little farther than far inferior men do. The frightful condition of a Time, when public and private Principle, as the word was once understood, having gone out of sight, and Self-interest being left to plot, and struggle, and scramble, as it could and would, Difficulties had accumulated till they were no longer to be borne, and the spirit that should have fronted and conquered them seemed to have forsaken the world;—when the Rich, as the utmost they could resolve on, had ceased to govern, and the Poor, in their fast-accumulating numbers, and ever-widening complexities, had ceased to be able to do without governing; and now the plan of 'Competition' and '*Laissez-faire*' was, on every side, approaching its consummation; and each, bound-up in the circle of his own wants and perils, stood grimly distrustful of his neighbour, and the distracted Common-weal was a Common-woe, and to all men it became apparent that the end was drawing nigh:—all this black aspect of Ruin and Decay, visible enough, experimentally known to our Sheffield friend, he calls by the name of 'Corn-Law,' and expects to be in good part delivered from, were the accursed Bread-tax repealed.

In this system of political Doctrine, even as here so emphatically set forth, there is not much of novelty. Radicals we have many; loud enough on this and other grievances; the removal of which is to be the one thing needful. The deep, wide flood of bitterness, and hope becoming hopeless, lies acrid, corrosive in every bosom; and flows fiercely enough through any orifice Accident may open: through Law-Reform, Legislative Reform, Poor-Laws, want of Poor-Laws, Tithes, Game-Laws, or, as we see here, Corn-Laws. Whereby indeed only this becomes clear, that a deep, wide flood of evil does exist and corrode; from which, in all ways, blindly and see-

ingly, men seek deliverance, and cannot rest till they find it; least of all till they know what part and proportion of it is to *be* found. But with us foolish sons of Adam this is ever the way: some evil that lies nearest us, be it a chronic sickness, or but a smoky chimney, is ever the acme and sum-total of all evil; the black hydra that shuts us out from a Promised Land; and so, in poor Mr. Shandy's fashion, must we 'shift from trouble to trouble, and from side to side; button-up one cause of vexation, and unbutton another.'

Thus for our keen-hearted singer, and sufferer, has the 'Bread-tax,' in itself a considerable but no immeasurable smoke-pillar, swoln out to be a world-embracing Darkness, that darkens and suffocates the whole earth, and has blotted out the heavenly stars. Into the merit of the Corn-Laws, which has often been discussed, in fit season, by competent hands, we do not enter here; least of all in the way of argument, in the way of blame, towards one who, if he read such merit with some emphasis 'on the scantier trenchers of his children,' may well be pardoned. That the 'Bread-tax,' with various other taxes, may erelong be altered and abrogated, and the Corn-Trade become as free as the poorest 'bread-taxed drudge' could wish it, or the richest 'satrap bread-tax-fed' could fear it, seems no extravagant hypothesis: would that the mad Time could, by such simple hellebore-dose, be healed! Alas, for the diseases of a world lying in wickedness, in heart-sickness and atrophy, quite another alcahest is needed;—a long, painful course of medicine and regimen, surgery and physic, not yet specified or indicated in the Royal-College Books!

But if there is little novelty in our friend's Political Philosophy, there is some in his political Feeling and Poetry. The peculiarity of this Radical is, that with all his stormful destructiveness, he combines a decided loyalty and faith. If he despise and trample under foot on the one hand, he exalts and reverences on the other; the 'landed pauper in his coach-and-four' rolls all the more glaringly, contrasted with the 'Rockinghams and Savilles' of the past, with the 'Lansdowns and Fitzwilliams,' many a 'Wentworth's lord,' still 'a bless-

ing' to the present. This man, indeed, has in him the root of all reverence,—a principle of Religion. He believes in a Godhead, not with the lips only, but apparently with the heart; who, as has been written, and often felt, 'reveals Himself in Parents, in all true Teachers, and Rulers,'—as in false Teachers and Rulers quite Another may be revealed! Our Rhymer, it would seem, is no Methodist: far enough from it. He makes 'the Ranter,' in his hot-headed way, exclaim over

The Hundred Popes of England's Jesuistry;

and adds, by way of note, in his own person, some still stronger sayings: How 'this baneful corporation, dismal as its Reign of Terror is, and long-armed its Holy Inquisition, must condescend to learn and teach what is useful, or go where all nuisances go.' As little perhaps is he a Churchman; the 'Cadi-Dervish' seems nowise to his mind. Scarcely, however, if at all, does he show aversion to the Church as Church; or, among his many griefs, touch upon Tithes as one. But, in any case, the black colours of Life, even as here painted, and brooded over, do not hide from him that a God is the Author and Sustainer thereof; that God's world, if made a House of Imprisonment, can also be a House of Prayer; wherein for the weary and heavy-laden, pity and hope are not altogether cut away.

It is chiefly in virtue of this inward temper of heart, with the clear disposition and adjustment which for all else results therefrom, that our Radical attains to be Poetical; that the harsh groanings, contentions, upbraidings, of one who unhappily has felt constrained to adopt such mode of utterance, become ennobled into something of music. If a land of bondage, this is still his Father's land, and the bondage endures not forever. As worshipper and believer, the captive can look with seeing eye: the aspect of the Infinite Universe still fills him with an Infinite feeling; his chains, were it but for moments, fall away; he soars free aloft, and the sunny regions of Poesy and Freedom gleam golden afar on the widened horizon. Gleamings we say, prophetic dawnings from those

far regions, spring up for him ; nay, beams of actual radiance. In his ruggedness, and dim contractedness (rather of place than of organ), he is not without touches of a feeling and vision, which, even in the stricter sense, is to be named poetical.

One deeply poetical idea, above all others, seems to have taken hold of him : the idea of Time. As was natural to a poetic soul, with few objects of Art in its environment, and driven inward, rather than invited outward, for occupation. This deep mystery of ever-flowing Time ; bringing forth, and, as the Ancients wisely fabled, devouring what it has brought forth ; rushing on, *in* us, yet above us, all uncontrollable by us ; and under it, dimly visible athwart it, the bottomless Eternal ;—this is, indeed, what we may call the primary idea of Poetry ; the first that introduces itself into the poetic mind. As here :

> The bee shall seek to settle on his hand,
> But from the vacant bench haste to the moor,
> Mourning the last of England's high-soul'd Poor,
> And bid the mountains weep for Enoch Wray.
> And for themselves,—albeit of things that last
> Unalter'd most ; for they shall pass away
> Like Enoch, though their iron roots seem fast,
> Bound to the eternal future as the past :
> The Patriarch died ; and they shall be no more !
> Yes, and the sailless worlds, which navigate
> The unutterable deep that hath no shore,
> Will lose their starry splendour soon or late,
> Like tapers, quench'd by Him, whose will is fate !
> Yes, and the Angel of Eternity,
> Who numbers worlds and writes their names in light,
> One day, O Earth, will look in vain for thee,
> And start and stop in his unerring flight,
> And with his wings of sorrow and affright
> Veil his impassion'd brow and heavenly tears !

And not the first idea only, but the greatest, properly the parent of all others. For if it can rise in the remotest ages, in the rudest states of culture, wherever an 'inspired thinker' happens to exist, it connects itself still with all great things,

with the highest results of new Philosophy, as of primeval Theology; and for the Poet, in particular, is as the life-element wherein alone his conceptions can take poetic form, and the whole world become miraculous and magical.

> We *are such stuff*
> As Dreams are made of: and our little life
> Is rounded with a Sleep!

Figure that, believe that, O Reader; then say whether the *Arabian Tales* seem wonderful!—'Rounded with a sleep (*mit Schlaf umgeben*)!' says Jean Paul; 'these three words created whole volumes in me.'

To turn now on our worthy Rhymer, who has brought us so much, and stingily insist on his errors and shortcomings, were no honest procedure. We had the whole poetical encyclopædia to draw upon, and say commodiously, Such and such an item is *not* here; of which encyclopædia the highest genius can fill but a portion. With much merit, far from common in his time, he is not without something of the faults of his time. We praised him for originality; yet is there a certain remainder of imitation in him; a tang of the Circulating Libraries; as in Sancho's wine, with its key and thong, there was a tang of iron and leather. To be reminded of Crabbe, with his truthful severity of style, in such a place, we cannot object; but what if there were a slight bravura dash of the fair tuneful Hemans? Still more, what have we to do with Byron, and his fierce vociferous mouthings, whether 'passionate,' or not passionate and only theatrical? King Cambyses' vein is, after all, but a worthless one; no vein for a wise man. Strength, if that be the thing aimed at, does not manifest itself in spasms, but in stout bearing of burdens. Our Author says, 'It is too bad to exalt into a hero the coxcomb who would have gone into hysterics if a tailor had laughed at him.' Walk not in his footsteps, then, we say, whether as hero or as singer; repent a little, for example, over somewhat in that fuliginous, blue-flaming, pitch-and-sulphur 'Dream of Enoch Wray,' and write the next otherwise.

We mean no imitation in a bad palpable sense; only that

there is a tone of such occasionally audible, which ought to be removed ;—of which, in any case, we make not much. Imitation is a leaning on something foreign ; incompleteness of individual development, defect of free utterance. From the same source spring most of our Author's faults ; in particular, his worst, which, after all, is intrinsically a defect of manner. He has little or no Humour. Without Humour of character he cannot well be ; but it has not yet got to utterance. Thus, where he has mean things to deal with, he knows not how to deal with them ; oftenest deals with them more or less meanly. In his vituperative prose Notes, he seems embarrassed ; and but ill hides his embarrassment, under an air of predetermined sarcasm, of knowing briskness, almost of vulgar pertness. He says, he cannot help it ; he is poor, hard-worked, and 'soot is soot.' True, indeed ; yet there is no connexion between Poverty and Discourtesy ; which latter originates in Dulness alone. Courtesy is the due of man to man ; not of suit of clothes to suit of clothes. He who could master so many things, and make even Corn-Laws rhyme, we require of him this farther thing : a bearing worthy of himself, and of the order he belongs to,—the highest and most ancient of all orders, that of Manhood. A pert snappishness is no manner for a brave man ; and then the manner so soon influences the matter : a far worse result. Let him speak wise things, and speak them wisely ; which latter may be done in many dialects, grave and gay, only in the snappish dialects seldom or never.

The truth is, as might have been expected, there is still much lying in him to be developed ; the hope of which development it were rather sad to abandon. Why, for example, should not his view of the world, his knowledge of what is and has been in the world, indefinitely extend itself? Were he merely the 'uneducated Poet,' we should say, he had read largely ; as he is not such, we say, Read still more, much more largely. Books enough there are in England, and of quite another weight and worth than that circulating-library sort ; may be procured too, may be read, even by a hard-worked man ; for what man (either in God's service or the

Devil's, as himself chooses it) is not hard-worked? But here again, where there is a will there is a way. True, our friend is no longer in his teens; yet still, as would seem, in the vigour of his years: we hope too that his mind is not finally shut-in, but of the improvable and enlargeable sort. If Alfieri (also kept busy enough, with horse-breaking and what not) learned Greek after he was fifty, why is the Corn-Law Rhymer too old to learn?

However, be in the future what there may, our Rhymer has already done what was much more difficult, and better than reading printed books;—looked into the great prophetic-manuscript Book of Existence, and read little passages there. Here, for example, is a sentence tolerably spelled:

> Where toils the Mill by ancient woods embraced,
> Hark, how the cold steel screams in hissing fire!
> Blind Enoch sees the Grinder's wheel no more,
> Couch'd beneath rocks and forests, that admire
> Their beauty in the waters, ere they roar
> Dash'd in white foam the swift circumference o'er.
> There draws the Grinder his laborious breath;
> There coughing at his deadly trade he bends:
> Born to die young, he fears nor man nor death;
> Scorning the future, what he earns he spends;
> Debauch and riot are his bosom friends.
> * * * * *
> Behold his failings! Hath he virtues too?
> He is no Pauper, blackguard though he be:
> Full well he knows what minds combined can do,
> Full well maintains his birthright: he is free,
> And, frown for frown, outstares monopoly.
> Yet Abraham and Elliot both in vain
> Bid science on his cheek prolong the bloom:
> He *will* not live! He seems in haste to gain
> The undisturb'd asylum of the tomb,
> And, old at two-and-thirty, meets his doom!

Or this, 'of Jem, the rogue avowed,'

> Whose trade is Poaching! Honest Jem works not,
> Begs not, but thrives by plundering beggars here.
> Wise as a lord, and quite as good a shot,
> He, like his betters, lives in hate and fear,

And feeds on partridge because bread is dear.
Sire of six sons apprenticed to the jail,
He prowls in arms, the Tory of the night;
With them he shares his battles and his ale,
With him they feel the majesty of might,
No Despot better knows that Power is Right.
Mark his unpaidish sneer, his lordly frown;
Hark how he calls the beadle and flunky liars;
See how magnificently he breaks down
His neighbour's fence, if so his will requires,
And how his struttle emulates the squire's!
* * * * *
Jem rises with the Moon; but when she sinks,
Homeward with sack-like pockets, and quick heels,
Hungry as boroughmongering gowl, he slinks.
He reads not, writes not, thinks not; scarcely feels;
Steals all he gets; serves Hell with all he steals!

It is rustic rude existence; barren moors, with the smoke of Forges rising over the waste expanse. Alas, no Arcadia; but the actual dwelling-place of actual toil-grimed sons of Tubalcain: yet are there blossoms, and the wild natural fragrance of gorse and broom; yet has the Craftsman pauses in his toil; the Craftsman too has an inheritance in Earth, and even in Heaven.

Light! All is not corrupt, for thou art pure,
Unchanged and changeless. Though frail man is vile,
Thou look'st on him; serene, sublime, secure,
Yet, like thy Father, with a pitying smile.
Even on this wintry day, as marble cold,
Angels might quit their home to visit thee,
And match their plumage with thy mantle roll'd
Beneath God's Throne, o'er billows of a sea
Whose isles are Worlds, whose bounds Infinity.
Why then is Enoch absent from my side?
I miss the rustle of his silver hair;
A guide no more, I seem to want a guide,
While Enoch journeys to the house of prayer;
Ah, ne'er came Sabbath-day but he was there!
Lo how, like him, erect and strong though gray,
Yon village-tower time-touch'd to God appeals!
And hark! the chimes of morning die away:
Hark! to the heart the solemn sweetness steals,

Like the heart's voice, unfelt by none who feels
That God is Love, that Man is living Dust;
Unfelt by none whom ties of brotherhood
Link to his kind; by none who puts his trust
In nought of Earth that hath survived the Flood,
Save those mute charities, by which the good
Strengthen poor worms, and serve their Maker best.
Hail, Sabbath! Day of mercy, peace and rest!
Thou o'er loud cities throw'st a noiseless spell;
The hammer there, the wheel, the saw molest
Pale Thought no more: o'er Trade's contentious hell
Meek Quiet spreads her wings invisible.
And when thou com'st, less silent are the fields,
Through whose sweet paths the toil-freed townsman steals.
To him the very air a banquet yields.
Envious he watches the poised hawk that wheels
His flight on chainless winds. Each cloud reveals
A paradise of beauty to his eye.
His little Boys are with him, seeking flowers,
Or chasing the too-venturous gilded fly.
So by the daisy's side he spends the hours,
Renewing friendship with the budding bowers:
And while might, beauty, good without alloy,
Are mirror'd in his children's happy eyes,—
In His great Temple offering thankful joy
To Him, the infinitely Great and Wise,
With soul attuned to Nature's harmonies,
Serene and cheerful as a sporting child,—
His *heart* refuses to believe that man
Could turn into a hell the blooming wild,
The blissful country where his childhood ran
A race with infant rivers, ere began—

—'king-humbling' Bread-tax, 'blind Misrule,' and several other crabbed things!

And so our Corn-Law Rhymer plays his part. In this wise does he indite and act his Drama of Life, which for him is all-too Domestic-Tragical. It is said, 'the good actor soon makes us forget the bad theatre, were it but a barn; while, again, nothing renders so apparent the badness of the bad actor as a theatre of peculiar excellence.' How much more in a theatre and drama such as these of Life itself! One other item,

however, we must note in that ill-decorated Sheffield theatre: the back-scene and bottom-decoration of it all; which is no other than a Workhouse. Alas, theWorkhouse is the bourne whither all these actors and workers are bound; whence none that has once passed it returns! A bodeful sound, like the rustle of approaching world-devouring tornadoes, quivers through their whole existence; and the voice of it is, Pauperism! The thanksgiving they offer up to Heaven is, that they are not yet Paupers; the earnest cry of their prayer is, that 'God would shield them from the bitterness of Parish Pay.'

Mournful enough, that a white European Man must pray wistfully for what the horse he drives is sure of,—That the strain of his whole faculties may not fail to earn him food and lodging. Mournful that a gallant manly spirit, with an eye to discern the world, a heart to reverence it, a hand cunning and willing to labour in it, must be haunted with such a fear. The grim end of it all, Beggary! A soul loathing, what true souls ever loathe, Dependence, help from the unworthy to help; yet sucked into the world-whirlpool,—able to do no other: the highest in man's heart struggling vainly against the lowest in man's destiny! In good truth, if many a sickly and sulky Byron, or Byronlet, glooming over the woes of existence, and how unworthy God's Universe is to have so distinguished a resident, could transport himself into the patched coat and sooty apron of a Sheffield Blacksmith, made with as strange faculties and feelings as he, made by God Almighty all one as he was,—it would throw a light on much for him.

Meanwhile, is it not frightful as well as mournful to consider how the wide-spread evil is spreading wider and wider? Most persons, who have had eyes to look with, may have verified, in their own circle, the statement of this Sheffield Eyewitness, and 'from their own knowledge and observation fearlessly declare that the little master-manufacturer, that the working man generally, is in a much worse condition than he was twenty-five years ago.' Unhappily, the fact is too plain; the reason and scientific necessity of it are too plain. In this mad state of things, every new man is a new misfortune; every new market a new complexity; the chapter of chances

grows ever more incalculable; the hungry gamesters (whose stake is their life) are ever increasing in numbers; the world-movement rolls on: by what method shall the weak and help-needing, who has none to help him, withstand it? Alas, how many brave hearts, ground to pieces in that unequal battle, have already sunk; in every sinking heart, a Tragedy, less famous than that of the Sons of Atreus; wherein, however, if no 'kingly house,' yet a manly house went to the dust, and a whole manly lineage was swept away! Must it grow worse and worse, till the last brave heart is broken in England; and this same 'brave Peasantry' has become a kennel of wild-howling ravenous Paupers? God be thanked! There is some feeble shadow of hope that the change may have begun while it was yet time. You may lift the pressure from the free man's shoulders, and bid him go forth rejoicing; but lift the slave's burden, he will only wallow the more composedly in his sloth: a nation of degraded men cannot be raised up, except by what we rightly name a miracle.

Under which point of view also, these little Volumes, indicating such a character in such a place, are not without significance. One faint symptom perhaps that clearness will return, that there is a possibility of its return. It is as if from that Gehenna of Manufacturing Radicalism, from amid its loud roaring and cursing, whereby nothing became feasible, nothing knowable, except this only, that misery and malady existed there, we heard now some manful tone of reason and determination, wherein alone can there be profit, or promise of deliverance. In this Corn-Law Rhymer we seem to trace something of the antique spirit; a spirit which had long become invisible among our working as among other classes; which here, perhaps almost for the first time, reveals itself in an altogether modern political vesture. 'The Pariahs of the Isle Woe,' as he passionately names them, are no longer Pariahs if they have become Men. Here is one man of their tribe; in several respects a true man; who has abjured Hypocrisy and Servility, yet not therewith trodden Religion and Loyalty under foot; not without justness of insight, devoutness, peaceable heroism of resolve; who, in all circumstances,

even in these strange ones, will be found quitting himself like a man. One such that has found a voice: who knows how many mute but not inactive brethren he may have, in his own and in all other ranks? Seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal! These are the men, wheresoever found, who are to stand forth in England's evil day, on whom the hope of England rests. For it has been often said, and must often be said again, that all Reform except a moral one will prove unavailing. Political Reform, pressingly enough wanted, can indeed root out the weeds (gross deep-fixed lazy dock-weeds, poisonous obscene hemlocks, ineffectual spurry in abundance); but it leaves the ground *empty*,—ready either for noble fruits, or for new worse tares! And how else is a Moral Reform to be looked for but in this way, that more and more Good Men are, by a bountiful Providence, sent hither to disseminate Goodness; literally to *sow* it, as in seeds shaken abroad by the living tree? For such, in all ages and places, is the nature of a Good Man; he is ever a mystic creative centre of Goodness: his influence, if we consider it, is not to be measured; for his works do not die, but being of Eternity, are eternal; and in new transformation, and ever-wider diffusion, endure, living and life-giving. Thou who exclaimest over the horrors and baseness of the Time, and how Diogenes would now need *two* lanterns in daylight, think of this: over the Time thou hast no power; to redeem a World sunk in dishonesty has not been given thee: solely over one man therein thou hast a quite absolute uncontrollable power; him redeem, him make honest; it will be something, it will be much, and thy life and labour not in vain.

We have given no epitomised abstract of these little Books, such as is the Reviewer's wont: we would gladly persuade many a reader, high and low, who takes interest not in rhyme only, but in reason, and the condition of his fellow-man, to purchase and peruse them for himself. It is proof of an innate love of worth, and how willingly the Public, did not thousand-voiced Puffery so confuse it, would have to do with substances, and not with deceptive shadows, that these Volumes

carry 'Third Edition' marked on them,—on all of them but the newest, whose fate with the reading world we yet know not; which, however, seems to deserve not worse but better than either of its forerunners.

Nay, it appears to us as if in this humble Chaunt of the *Village Patriarch* might be traced rudiments of a truly great idea; great though all undeveloped. The Rhapsody of 'Enoch Wray' is, in its nature and unconscious tendency, Epic; a whole world lies shadowed in it. What we might call an inarticulate, half-audible Epic! The main figure is a blind aged man; himself a ruin, and encircled with the ruin of a whole Era. Sad and great does that image of a universal Dissolution hover visible as a poetic background. Good old Enoch! He could *do* so much; was so wise, so valiant. No Ilion had he destroyed; yet somewhat he had built up: where the Mill stands noisy by its cataract, making corn into bread for men, it was Enoch that reared it, and made the rude rocks send it water; where the mountain Torrent now boils in vain, and is mere passing music to the traveller, it was Enoch's cunning that spanned it with that strong Arch, grim, time-defying. Where Enoch's hand or mind has been, Disorder has become Order; Chaos has receded some little handbreadth, had to give up some new handbreadth of his ancient realm. Enoch too has seen his followers fall round him (by stress of hardship, and the arrows of the gods), has performed funeral games for them, and raised sandstone memorials, and carved his *Abiit ad Plures* thereon, with his own hand. The living chronicle and epitome of a whole century; when he departs, a whole century will become dead, historical.

Rudiments of an Epic, we say; and of the true Epic of our Time,—were the genius but arrived that could sing it! Not 'Arms and the Man;' 'Tools and the Man,' that were now our Epic. What indeed are Tools, from the Hammer and Plummet of Enoch Wray to this Pen we now write with, but Arms, wherewith to do battle against Unreason without or within, and smite in pieces not miserable fellowmen, but the Arch-Enemy that makes us all miserable; henceforth the only legitimate battle!

Which Epic, as we granted, is here altogether imperfectly sung; scarcely a few notes thereof brought freely out: nevertheless with indication, with prediction that it will be sung. Such is the purport and merit of the *Village Patriarch;* it struggles towards a noble utterance, which however it can nowise find. Old Enoch is from the first speechless, heard of rather than heard or seen; at best, mute, motionless like a stone-pillar of his own carving. Indeed, to find fit utterance for such meaning as lies struggling here, is a problem, to which the highest poetic minds may long be content to accomplish only approximate solutions. Meanwhile, our honest Rhymer, with no guide but the instinct of a clear natural talent, has created and adjusted somewhat, not without vitality of union; has avoided somewhat, the road to which lay open enough. His *Village Patriarch*, for example, though of an elegiac strain, is not wholly lachrymose, not without touches of rugged gaiety;—is like Life itself, with tears and toil, with laughter and rude play, such as metallurgic Yorkshire sees it: in which sense, that wondrous Courtship of the sharp-tempered, oft-widowed Alice Green may pass, questionable, yet with a certain air of soot-stained genuineness. And so has, not a Picture, indeed, yet a sort of genial Study or Cartoon come together for him: and may endure there, after some flary oil-daubings, which we have seen framed with gilding, and hung-up in proud galleries, have become rags and rubbish.

To one class of readers especially, such Books as these ought to be interesting: to the highest, that is to say, the richest class. Among our Aristocracy, there are men, we trust there are many men, who feel that they also are workmen, born to toil, ever in their great Taskmaster's eye, faithfully with heart and head for those that with heart and hand do, under the same great Taskmaster, toil for them;—who have even this noblest and hardest work set before them: To deliver out of that Egyptian bondage to Wretchedness, and Ignorance, and Sin, the hardhanded millions; of whom this hardhanded earnest witness and writer is here representative. To such men his writing will be as a Document, which they will

lovingly interpret: what is dark and exasperated and acrid, in their humble Brother, they for themselves will enlighten and sweeten; taking thankfully what is the real purport of his message, and laying it earnestly to heart. Might an instructive relation and interchange between High and Low at length ground itself, and more and more perfect itself,—to the unspeakable profit of all parties; for if all parties are to love and help one another, the first step towards this is, that all thoroughly understand one another! To such rich men an authentic message from the hearts of poor men, from the heart of one poor man, will be welcome.

To another class of our Aristocracy, again, who unhappily feel rather that they are *not* workmen; and profess not so much to bear any burden, as to be themselves, with utmost attainable *steadiness*, and if possible *gracefulness*, borne,—such a phenomenon as this of the Sheffield Corn-Law Rhymer, with a Manchester Detrosier, and much else, pointing the same way, will be quite unwelcome; indeed, to the clearer-sighted, astonishing and alarming. It indicates that they find themselves, as Napoleon was wont to say, 'in a new position;'—a position wonderful enough; of extreme singularity, to which, in the whole course of History, there is perhaps but one case in some measure parallel. The case alluded to stands recorded in the *Book of Numbers:* the case of Balaam the son of Beor. Truly, if we consider it, there are few passages more notable and pregnant in their way, than this of Balaam. The Midianitish Soothsayer (Truth-speaker, or as we should now say, Counsel-giver and Senator) is journeying forth, as he has from of old quite prosperously done, in the way of his vocation; not so much to 'curse the people of the Lord,' as to earn for himself a comfortable penny by such means as are possible and expedient; something, it is hoped, midway between cursing and blessing; which shall not, except in case of necessity, be either a curse or a blessing, or indeed be anything so much as a Nothing that will look like a Something and bring wages in. For the man is not dishonest; far from it: still less is he honest; but above all things, he is, has been and will be, respectable. Did calumny ever dare to fasten itself on the fair fame

of Balaam? In his whole walk and conversation, has he not shown consistency enough; ever doing and speaking the thing that was decent; with proper spirit maintaining his status; so that friend and opponent must often compliment him, and defy the spiteful world to say, *Herein* art thou a Knave? And now as he jogs along, in official comfort, with brave official retinue, his heart filled with good things, his head with schemes for the Suppression of Vice, and the Cause of civil and religious Liberty all over the world;—consider what a spasm, and life-clutching ice-taloned pang, must have shot through the brain and pericardium of Balaam, when his Ass not only on the sudden stood stock-still, defying spur and cudgel, but—*began to talk*, and that in a reasonable manner! Did not his face, elongating, collapse, and tremour occupy his joints? For the thin crust of Respectability has cracked asunder; and a bottomless preternatural Inane yawns under him instead. Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness: the spirit-stirring Vote, ear-piercing Hear; the big Speech that makes ambition virtue; soft Palm-greasing first of raptures, and Cheers that emulate sphere-music: Balaam's occupation's gone!—

As for our stout Corn-Law Rhymer, what can we say by way of valediction but this, "Well done; come again, doing better?" Advices enough there were; but all lie included under one: To keep his eyes open, and do honestly whatsoever his hand shall find to do. We have praised him for sincerity: let him become more and more sincere; casting out all remnants of Hearsay, Imitation, ephemeral Speculation; resolutely '*clearing* his mind of Cant.' We advised a wider course of reading: would he forgive us if we now suggested the question, Whether Rhyme is the only dialect he can write in; whether Rhyme is, after all, the natural or fittest dialect for him? In good Prose, which differs inconceivably from bad Prose, what may not be written, what may not be read; from a Waverley Novel to an Arabic Koran, to an English Bible! Rhyme has plain advantages; which, however, are often purchased too dear. If the inward thought *can* speak itself, instead of sing itself, let it, especially in these quite un-

musical days, do the former! In any case, if the inward Thought do not sing itself, that singing of the outward Phrase is a timber-toned false matter we could well dispense with. Will our Rhymer consider himself, then; and decide for what is actually best. Rhyme, up to this hour, never seems altogether obedient to him; and disobedient Rhyme,—who would ride on *it* that had once learned walking!

He takes amiss that some friends have admonished him to quit Politics: we will not repeat that admonition. Let him, on this as on all other matters, take solemn counsel with his own Socrates'-Demon; such as dwells in every mortal; such as he is a happy mortal who can hear the voice of, follow the behests of, like an unalterable law. At the same time, we could truly wish to see such a mind as his engaged rather in considering what, in his own sphere, could be *done*, than what, in his own or other spheres, ought to be *destroyed;* rather in producing or preserving the True, than in mangling and slashing asunder the False. Let him be at ease; the False is already dead, or lives only with a mock life. The death-sentence of the False was of old, from the first beginning of it, written in Heaven; and is now proclaimed in the Earth, and read aloud at all market-crosses; nor are innumerable volunteer tipstaves and headsmen wanting, to execute the same: for which needful service men inferior to him may suffice. Why should the heart of the Corn-Law Rhymer be troubled? Spite of 'Bread-tax,' he and his brave children, who will emulate their sire, have yet bread: the Workhouse, as we rejoice to fancy, has receded into the safe distance; and is now quite shut-out from his poetic pleasure-ground. Why should he afflict himself with devices of 'Boroughmongering gowls,' or the rage of the Heathen imagining a vain thing? This matter, which he calls Corn-Law, will not have completed itself, adjusted itself into clearness, for the space of a century or two: nay after twenty centuries, what will there, or can there be for the son of Adam but Work, Work, two hands quite *full* of Work! Meanwhile, is not the Corn-Law Rhymer already a king, though a belligerent one; king of his own mind and faculty; and what man in the long-run is king of

more? Not one in the thousand, even among sceptred kings, is king of so much. Be diligent in business, then; fervent in spirit. Above all things, lay aside anger, uncharitableness, hatred, noisy tumult; avoid them, as worse than Pestilence, worse than 'Bread-tax' itself:

> For it well beseemeth kings, all mortals it beseemeth well,
> To possess their souls in patience, and await what can betide.

ON HISTORY AGAIN.

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ON HISTORY AGAIN.

Fragment of an Inaugural Discourse delivered before the 'Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty.' (p. 99).—History the most profitable of all studies: The Message, or Letter of Instructions, which all Mankind delivers to each man. Immeasurable imperfection of our highest Historians: Of the *thing* now gone silent, called Past, how much do we know? Nature, however, not blamable: Man's plentiful equipment for publishing himself, by Tongue, Pen and Printing-Press. His chief wants, want of Honesty and of Understanding: The event worthiest to be known, likeliest of all to be least spoken of. (103).—Threatenings of an Historic Deluge. History, before it can become Universal History, needs of all things to be compressed. Wise Memory and wise Oblivion: Oblivion the dark page, whereon Memory writes in characters of Light. Imperfections enough in practice: And yet only what bears fruit is at last rememberable. Historical perspective. History the true Epic Poem, and universal Divine Scripture. (107).

ON HISTORY AGAIN.[1]

[1833.]

[The following singular Fragment on *History* forms part, as may be recognised, of the Inaugural Discourse delivered by our assiduous 'D. T.' at the opening of the *Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty*. The Discourse, if one may credit the Morning Papers, 'touched in the most wonderful manner, didactically, poetically, almost prophetically, on all things in this world and the next, in a strain of sustained or rather of suppressed passionate eloquence rarely witnessed in Parliament or out of it: the chief bursts were received with profound silence,'—interrupted, we fear, by snuff-taking. As will be seen, it is one of the didactic passages that we introduce here. The Editor of this Magazine is responsible for its accuracy, and publishes, if not with leave given, then with leave taken.—O. Y.]

* * * History recommends itself as the most profitable of all studies: and truly, for such a being as Man, who is born, and has to learn and work, and then after a measured term of years to depart, leaving descendants and performances, and so, in all ways, to vindicate himself as vital portion of a Mankind, no study could be fitter. History is the Letter of Instructions, which the old generations write and posthumously transmit to the new; nay it may be called, more generally still, the Message, verbal or written, which all Mankind delivers to every man; it is the only *articulate* communication (when the inarticulate and mute, intelligible or not, lie round us and in us, so strangely through every fibre of our being, every step of our activity) which the Past can have with the Present, the Distant with what is Here. All Books, there-

[1] Fraser's Magazine, No. 41.

fore, were they but Song-books or treatises on Mathematics, are in the long-run historical documents—as indeed all Speech itself is: thus might we say, History is not only the fittest study, but the only study, and includes all others whatsoever. The Perfect in History, he who understood, and saw and knew within himself, *all* that the whole Family of Adam had hitherto *been* and hitherto *done*, were perfect in all learning extant or possible; needed not thenceforth to *study* any more; had thenceforth nothing left but to *be* and to *do* something himself, that others might make History of it, and learn of *him*.

Perfection in any kind is well known not to be the lot of man: but of all supernatural perfect-characters this of the Perfect in History (so easily conceivable too) were perhaps the most miraculous. Clearly a faultless monster which the world is not to see, not even on paper. Had the wandering Jew, indeed, begun to wander at Eden, and with a Fortunatus's Hat on his head! Nanac Shah too, we remember, steeped himself three days in some sacred Well; and there learnt enough: Nanac's was a far easier method; but unhappily not practicable—in this climate. Consider, however, at what immeasurable distance from this perfect Nanac your highest imperfect Gibbons play their part! Were there no brave men, thinkest thou, before Agamemnon? Beyond the Thracian Bosphorus, was all dead and void; from Cape Horn to Nova Zembla, round the whole habitable Globe, not a mouse stirring? Or, again, in reference to Time:—the Creation of the World is indeed old, compare it to the Year One; yet young, of yesterday, compare it to Eternity! Alas, all Universal History is but a sort of Parish History; which the 'P. P. Clerk of this Parish,' member of 'our Alehouse Club' (instituted for what 'Psalmody' is in request there) puts together,—in such sort as his fellow-members will praise. Of the *thing* now gone silent, named Past, which was once Present, and loud enough, how much do we know? Our 'Letter of Instructions' comes to us in the saddest state; falsified, blotted out, torn, lost and but a shred of it in existence; this too so difficult to read or spell.

Unspeakably precious meanwhile is our shred of a Letter, is our written or spoken Message, such as we have it. Only he who understands what has been, can know what should be and will be. It is of the last importance that the individual have ascertained his relation to the whole: 'an individual helps not,' it has been written; 'only he who unites with many at the proper hour.' How easy, in a sense, for your all-instructed Nanac to work without waste or force (or what we call fault); and, in practice, act new History, as perfectly as, in theory, he knew the old! Comprehending what the given world was, what it had and what it wanted, how might his clear effort strike-in at the right time and the right point; wholly increasing the true current and tendency, nowhere cancelling itself in opposition thereto! Unhappily, such smooth-running, ever-accelerated course is nowise the one appointed us; cross currents we have, perplexed backfloods; innumerable efforts (every new man is a new effort) consume themselves in aimless eddies: thus is the River of Existence so wild-flowing, wasteful; and whole multitudes, and whole generations, in painful unreason, spend and are spent on what can never profit. Of all which, does not one-half originate in this which we have named want of Perfection in History;—the other half, indeed, in another want still deeper, still more irremediable?

Here, however, let us grant that Nature, in regard to such historic want, is nowise blamable: taking up the other face of the matter, let us rather admire the pains she has been at, the truly magnificent provision she has made, that this same Message of Instructions might reach us in boundless plenitude. Endowments, faculties enough we have: it is her wise will too that no faculty imparted to us shall rust from disuse; the miraculous faculty of Speech, once given, becomes not more a gift than a necessity; the Tongue, with or without much meaning, will keep in motion; and only in some La Trappe by unspeakable self-restraint forbear wagging. As little can the fingers that have learned the miracle of Writing lie idle; if there is a rage of speaking, we know also there is a rage of writing, perhaps the more furious of the two. It is

said, 'so eager are men to speak, they will not let one another get to speech;' but, on the other hand, writing is usually transacted in private, and every man has his own desk and inkstand, and sits independent and unrestrainable there. Lastly, multiply this power of the Pen some ten-thousandfold: that is to say, invent the Printing-Press, with its Printer's Devils, with its Editors, Contributors, Booksellers, Billstickers, and see what it will do! Such are the means wherewith Nature, and Art the daughter of Nature, have equipped their favourite, man, for publishing himself to man.

Consider now two things: first, that one Tongue, of average velocity, will publish at the rate of a thick octavo volume per day; and then how many nimble enough Tongues may be supposed to be at work on this Planet Earth, in this City London, at this hour! Secondly, that a Literary Contributor, if in good heart and urged by hunger, will many times, as we are credibly informed, accomplish his two Magazine sheets within the four-and-twenty hours; such Contributors being now numerable not by the thousand, but by the million. Nay, taking History, in its narrower, vulgar sense, as the mere chronicle of 'occurrences,' of things that can be, as we say, 'narrated,' our calculation is still but a little altered. Simple Narrative, it will be observed, is the grand staple of Speech; 'the common man,' says Jean Paul, 'is copious in Narrative, exiguous in Reflection; only with the cultivated man is it otherwise, reversewise.' Allow even the thousandth part of human publishing for the emission of Thought, though perhaps the millionth were enough, we have still the nine hundred and ninety-nine employed in History proper, in relating occurrences, or conjecturing probabilities of such; that is to say, either in History or Prophecy, which is a new form of History;—and so the reader can judge with what abundance this life-breath of the human intellect is furnished in our world: whether Nature has been stingy to him or munificent. Courage, reader! Never can the historical inquirer want pabulum, better or worse: are there not forty-eight longitudinal feet of small-printed History in thy Daily Newspaper?

The truth is, if Universal History is such a miserable de-

fective 'shred' as we have named it, the fault lies not in our historic organs, but wholly in our misuse of these ; say rather, in so many wants and obstructions, varying with the various age, that pervert our right use of them ; especially two wants that press heavily in all ages : want of Honesty, want of Understanding. If the thing published is not true, is only a supposition, or even a wilful invention, what can be done with it, except abolish it and annihilate it? But again, Truth, says Horne Tooke, means simply the thing *trowed*, the thing believed ; and now, from this to the thing *itself*, what a new fatal deduction have we to suffer! Without Understanding, Belief itself will profit little : and how can your publishing avail, when there was no vision in it, but mere blindness? For as in political appointments, the man you appoint is not he who was ablest to discharge the duty, but only he who was ablest to be appointed ; so too, in all historic elections and selections, the maddest work goes on. The event worthiest to be known is perhaps of all others the least spoken of: nay, some say, it lies in the very nature of such events to be so. Thus, in those same forty-eight longitudinal feet of History, or even when they have stretched out into forty-eight longitudinal miles, of the like quality, there may not be the forty-eighth part of a hairsbreadth that will turn to anything. Truly, in these times, the quantity of printed Publication that will need to be consumed with fire, before the smallest permanent advantage can be drawn from it, might fill us with astonishment, almost with apprehension. Where, alas, is the intrepid Herculean Dr. Wagtail, that will reduce all these paper-mountains into tinder, and extract therefrom the three drops of Tinder-water Elixir?

For indeed, looking at the activity of the historic Pen and Press through this last half-century, and what bulk of History it yields for that period alone, and how it is henceforth like to increase in decimal or vigesimal geometric progression, —one might feel as if a day were not distant, when perceiving that the whole Earth would not now contain those writings of what was done in the Earth, the human memory must needs sink confounded, and cease remembering!—To some

the reflection may be new and consolatory, that this state of ours is not so unexampled as it seems; that with memory and things memorable the case was always intrinsically similar. The Life of Nero occupies some diamond pages of our Tacitus: but in the parchment and papyrus archives of Nero's generation how many did it fill? The author of the *Vie de Sénèque*, at this distance, picking up a few residuary snips, has with ease made two octavos of it. On the other hand, were the contents of the then extant Roman memories, or, going to the utmost length, were all that was then *spoken* on it, put in types, how many 'longitudinal feet' of small-pica had we,—in belts that would go round the Globe!

History, then, before it can become Universal History, needs of all things to be compressed. Were there no epitomising of History, one could not remember beyond a week. Nay, go to that with it, and exclude compression altogether, we could not remember an hour, or at all: for Time, like Space, is *infinitely* divisible; and an hour with its events, with its sensations and emotions, might be diffused to such expansion as should cover the whole field of memory, and push all else over the limits. Habit, however, and the natural constitution of man, do themselves prescribe serviceable rules for remembering; and keep at a safe distance from us all such fantastic possibilities;—into which only some foolish Mahomedan Caliph, ducking his head in a bucket of enchanted water, and so beating out one wet minute into seven long years of servitude and hardship, could fall. The rudest peasant has his complete set of Annual Registers legibly printed in his brain; and, without the smallest training in Mnemonics, the proper pauses, subdivisions and subordinations of the little to the great, all introduced there. Memory and Oblivion, like Day and Night, and indeed like all other Contradictions in this strange dualistic Life of ours, are necessary for each other's existence: Oblivion is the dark page, whereon Memory writes her light-beam characters, and makes them legible; were it all light, nothing could be read there, any more than if it were all darkness.

As with man and these autobiographic Annual-Registers of

his, so goes it with Mankind and its Universal History, which also is *its* Autobiography : a like unconscious talent of remembering and of forgetting again does the work here. The transactions of the day, were they never so noisy, cannot remain loud forever ; the morrow comes with its new noises, claiming also to be registered ; in the immeasurable conflict and concert of this chaos of existence, figure after figure sinks, as *all* that has emerged must one day sink : what cannot be kept in mind will even go out of mind ; History contracts itself into readable extent ; and at last, in the hands of some Bossuet or Müller, the whole printed History of the World, from the Creation downwards, has grown shorter than that of the Ward of Portsoken for one solar day.

Whether such contraction and epitome is always wisely formed, might admit of question ; or rather, as we say, admits of no question. Scandalous Cleopatras and Messalinas, Caligulas and Commoduses, in unprofitable proportion, survive for memory ; while a scientific Pancirollus must write his Book of Arts Lost ; and a moral Pancirollus, were the vision lent him, might write a still more mournful Book of Virtues Lost ; of noble men, doing and daring and enduring, whose heroic life, as a new revelation and development of Life itself, were a possession for all, but is now lost and forgotten, History having otherwise filled her page. In fact, here as elsewhere, what we call Accident governs much ; in any case, History must come together not as it should, but as it can and will.

Remark nevertheless how, by natural tendency alone, and as it were without man's forethought, a certain fitness of selection, and this even to a high degree, becomes inevitable. Wholly worthless the selection could not be, were there no better rule than this to guide it : that men permanently speak only of what is extant and actively alive beside them. Thus do the things that have produced fruit, nay whose fruit still grows, turn out to be the things chosen for record and writing of ; which things alone were great, and worth recording. The battle of Chalons, where Hunland met Rome, and the Earth was played for, at sword-fence, by two earth-bestriding

giants, the sweep of whose swords cut kingdoms in pieces, hovers dim in the languid remembrance of a few; while the poor police-court Treachery of a wretched Iscariot, transacted in the wretched land of Palestine, centuries earlier, for 'thirty pieces of silver,' lives clear in the heads, in the hearts of all men. Nay moreover, as only that which bore fruit was great; so of all things, that whose fruit is still here and growing must be the greatest, the best worth remembering; which again, as we see, by the very nature of the case, is mainly the thing remembered. Observe too how this 'mainly' tends always to become a 'solely,' and the approximate continually approaches nearer: for triviality after triviality, as it perishes from the living activity of men, drops away from their speech and memory, and the great and vital more and more exclusively survive there. Thus does Accident correct Accident; and in the wondrous boundless jostle of things (an aimful Power presiding over it, say rather, dwelling *in* it), a result comes out that may be put up with.

Curious, at all events, and worth looking at once in our life, is this same compressure of History, be the process thereof what it may. How the 'forty-eight longitudinal feet' have shrunk together after a century, after ten centuries! Look back from end to beginning, over any History; over our own *England:* how, in rapidest law of perspective, it dwindles from the canvas! An unhappy Sybarite, if we stand within two centuries of him and name him Charles Second, shall have twelve times the space of a heroic Alfred; two or three thousand times, if we name him George the Fourth. The whole Saxon Heptarchy, though events, to which Magna Charta, and the world-famous Third Reading, are as dust in the balance, took place then,—for did not England, to mention nothing else, get itself, if not represented in Parliament, yet converted to Christianity?—the whole Saxon Heptarchy, I say, is summed up practically in that one sentence of Milton's, the only one succeeding writers have copied, or readers remembered, of the 'fighting and flocking of kites and crows.' Neither was that an unimportant wassail-night, when the two black-browed Brothers, strongheaded, headstrong, Hengst and

Horsa (*Stallion* and *Horse*), determined on a man-hunt in Britain, the boar-hunt at home having got over-crowded; and so, of a few hungry Angles made an English Nation, and planted it here, and—produced *thee* O Reader! Of Hengst's whole campaignings scarcely half a page of good narrative can now be written; the *Lord Mayor's Visit to Oxford* standing, meanwhile, revealed to mankind in a respectable volume. Nay what of this? Does not the Destruction of a Brunswick Theatre take above a million times as much telling as the Creation of a World?

To use a ready-made similitude, we might liken Universal History to a magic web; and consider with astonishment how, by philosophic insight and indolent neglect, the ever-growing fabric wove itself forward, out of that ravelled immeasurable mass of threads and thrums, which we name *Memoirs;* nay, at each new lengthening, at each new *epoch*, changed its whole proportions, its hue and structure to the very origin. Thus, do not the records of a Tacitus acquire new meaning, after seventeen hundred years, in the hands of a Montesquieu? Niebuhr must reinterpret for us, at a still greater distance, the writings of a Titus Livius: nay, the religious archaic chronicles of a Hebrew Prophet and Lawgiver escape not the like fortune; and many a ponderous Eichhorn scans, with new-ground philosophic spectacles, the revelation of a Moses, and strives to reproduce for this century what, thirty centuries ago, was of plainly infinite significance to all. Consider History with the beginnings of it stretching dimly into the remote Time; emerging darkly out of the mysterious Eternity: the ends of it enveloping *us* at this hour, whereof we at this hour, both as actors and relators, form part! In shape we might mathematically name it *Hyperbolic-Asymptotic;* ever of *infinite* breadth around us; soon shrinking within narrow limits: ever narrowing more and more into the infinite depth behind us. In essence and significance it has been called 'the true Epic Poem, and Universal Divine Scripture, *whose* "plenary inspiration" no man, out of Bedlam or in it, shall bring in question.'

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DIDEROT.

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DIDEROT.

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DIDEROT.[1]

[1833.]

The *Acts* of the *Christian Apostles*, on which, as we may say, the world has, now for eighteen centuries, had its foundation, are written in so small a compass, that they can be read in one little hour. The *Acts* of the *French Philosophes*, the importance of which is already fast exhausting itself, lie recorded in whole acres of typography, and would furnish reading for a lifetime. Nor is the stock, as we see, yet anywise complete, or within computable distance of completion. Here are Four quite new Octavos, recording the labours, voyages, victories, amours and indigestions of the Apostle Denis: it is but a year or two since a new contribution on Voltaire came before us; since Jean Jacques had a new *Life* written for him; and then of those *Feuilles de Grimm*, what incalculable masses may yet lie dormant in the Petersburg Library, waiting only to be awakened and let slip!—Reading for a lifetime? Thomas Parr might begin reading in long-clothes, and stop in his last hundred and fiftieth year without having ended. And then, as to when the process of addition will cease, and the Acts and Epistles of the Parisian Church of Antichrist will have completed themselves; except in so far as the quantity of paper written on, or even

[1] Foreign Quarterly Review, No. 22.—1. Mémoires, Correspondance et Ouvrages inédits de Diderot; publiés d'après les manuscrits confiés, en mourant, par l'auteur à Grimm. 4 tom. 8vo. Paris (Paulin, Libraire-Editeur), 1831.

2. Œuvres de Denis Diderot; précédées de Mémoires historiques et philosophiques sur sa Vie et ses Ouvrages, par J. A. Naigeon. 22 tom. 8vo. Paris (Brière), 1821.

manufactured, in those days, being finite and not infinite, the business one day or other must cease, and the Antichristian Canon close for the last time,—we yet know nothing.

Meanwhile, let us nowise be understood as lamenting this stupendous copiousness, but rather as viewing it historically with patience, and indeed with satisfaction. Memoirs, so long as they are true, how stupid soever, can hardly be accumulated in excess. The stupider they are, let them simply be the sooner cast into the oven; if true, they will always instruct more or less, were it only in the way of confirmation and repetition; and, what is of vast moment, they do not *mis*instruct. Day after day looking at the high destinies which yet await Literature, which Literature will erelong address herself with more decisiveness than ever to fulfil, it grows clearer to us that the proper task of Literature lies in the domain of BELIEF; within which 'Poetic Fiction,' as it is charitably named, will have to take a quite new figure, if allowed a settlement there. Whereby were it not reasonable to prophesy that this exceeding great multitude of Novel-writers, and such like, must, in a new generation, gradually do one of two things: either retire into nurseries, and work for children, minors and semifatuous persons of both sexes; or else, what were far better, sweep their Novel-fabric into the dust-cart, and betake them with such faculty as they have to understand and record what is *true*,—of which, surely, there is, and will forever be, a whole Infinitude unknown to us, of infinite importance to us! Poetry, it will more and more come to be understood, is nothing but higher Knowledge; and the only genuine Romance (for grown persons) Reality. The Thinker is the Poet, the Seer: let him who *sees* write down according to his gift of sight; if deep and with inspired vision, then creatively, poetically; if common, and with only uninspired, everyday vision, let him at least be faithful in this and write *Memoirs*.

On us still so near at hand, that Eighteenth Century in Paris presenting itself nowise as portion of the magic web of Universal History, but only as the confused and ravelled mass of threads and thrums, ycleped *Memoirs*, in process of *being*

woven into such,—imposes a rather complex relation. Of which, however, as of all such, the leading rules may be happily comprised in this very plain one, prescribed by Nature herself: to search in them, so far as they seem worthy, for whatsoever can help us forward on our own path, were it in the shape of intellectual instruction, of moral edification, nay of mere solacement and amusement. The Bourbons, indeed, took a shorter method (the like of which has been often recommended elsewhere): they shut up and hid the *graves* of the Philosophes, hoping that their lives and writings might likewise thereby go out of sight and out of mind; and thus the whole business would be, so to speak, *suppressed*. Foolish Bourbons! These things were not done in a corner, but on high places, before the anxious eyes of all mankind: hidden they can in nowise be: to conquer them, to resist them, our first indispensable preliminary is to see and comprehend them. To us, indeed, as their immediate successors, the right comprehension of them is of prime necessity; for, sent of God or of the Devil, they have plainly enough gone before us, and left us such and such a world: it is on ground of their tillage, with the stubble of their harvest standing on it, that we now have to plough. Before all things, then, let us understand what ground it is; what manner of men and husbandmen these were. For which reason, be all authentic Philosophe-Memoirs welcome, each in its kind! For which reason, let us now, without the smallest reluctance, penetrate into this wondrous Gospel according to Denis Diderot, and expatiate there, to see whether it will yield us aught.

In any phenomenon, one of the most important moments is the *end*. Now this epoch of the Eighteenth or Philosophe-century was properly the End; the end of a Social System which for above a thousand years had been building itself together, and, after that, had begun, for some centuries (as human things all do), to moulder down. The mouldering-down of a Social System is no cheerful business either to form part of, or to look at: however, at length, in the course of it, there comes a time when the mouldering changes into a rush-

ing; active hands drive-in their wedges, set-to their crow-bars; there is a comfortable appearance of work going on. Instead of here and there a stone falling out, here and there a handful of dust, whole masses tumble down, whole clouds and whirlwinds of dust: torches too are applied, and the rotten easily takes fire: so what with flame-whirlwind, what with dust-whirlwind, and the crash of falling towers, the concern grows eminently interesting; and our assiduous craftsmen can encourage one another with *Vivats*, and cries of *Speed the work.* Add to this, that of all labourers, no one can see such rapid extensive fruit of his labour as the Destroyer can and does: it will not seem unreasonable that measuring from effect to cause, he should esteem his labour as the best and greatest; and a Voltaire, for example, be by his guild-brethren and apprentices confidently accounted 'not only the greatest man of this age, but of all past ages, and perhaps the greatest that Nature could produce.' Worthy old Nature! She goes on producing whatsoever is needful in each season of her course; and produces, with perfect composure, that Encyclopedist opinion, that she can produce no more.

Such a torch-and-crowbar period, of quick rushing down and conflagration, was this of the *Siècle de Louis Quinze;* when the Social System having all fallen into rottenness, rain-holes and noisome decay, the shivering natives resolved to cheer their dull abode by the questionable step of setting it on fire. Questionable we call their manner of procedure; the thing itself, as all men may now see, was inevitable; one way or other, whether by prior burning or milder methods, the old house must needs be new-built. We behold the business of pulling down, or at least of assorting the rubbish, still go resolutely on, all over Europe: here and there some traces of new foundation, of new building-up, may now also, to the eye of Hope, disclose themselves.

To get acquainted with Denis Diderot and his life were to see the significant epitome of all this, as it works on the thinking and acting soul of a man, fashions for him a singular element of existence, gives himself therein a peculiar hue and figure. Unhappily, after all that has been written, the

matter still is not luminous: to us strangers, much in that foreign economy, and method of working and living, remains obscure; much in the man himself, and his inward nature and structure. But indeed, it is several years since the present Reviewer gave up the idea of what could be called *understanding* any man whatever, even himself. Every Man, within that inconsiderable figure of his, contains a whole Spirit-kingdom and Reflex of the ALL; and, though to the eye but some six standard feet in size, reaches downwards and upwards, unsurveyable, fading into the regions of Immensity and of Eternity. Life everywhere, as woven on that stupendous ever-marvellous 'Loom of Time,' may be said to fashion itself of a woof of light, indeed, yet on a warp of mystic darkness: only He that created it can understand it. As to this Diderot, had we once got so far that we could, in the faintest degree, personate him; take upon ourselves his character and his environment of circumstances, and act his Life over again, in that small Private-Theatre of ours (under our own Hat), with moderate illusiveness and histrionic effect,—*that* were what, in conformity with common speech, we should name *understanding* him, and could be abundantly content with.

In his manner of appearance before the world, Diderot has been, perhaps to an extreme degree, unfortunate. His literary productions were invariably dashed-off in hottest haste, and left generally, on the waste of Accident, with an ostrich-like indifference. He had to live, in France, in the sour days of a *Journal de Trevoux;* of a suspicious, decaying Sorbonne. He was too poor to set foreign presses, at Kehl or elsewhere, in motion; too headlong and quick of temper to seek help from those that could: thus must he, if his pen was not to lie idle, write much of which there was no publishing. His Papers accordingly are found flying about like Sibyl's leaves, in all corners of the world: for many years no tolerable Collection of his Writings was attempted; to this day there is none that in any sense can be called perfect. Two spurious, surreptitious Amsterdam Editions, 'or rather formless, blundering Agglomerations,' were all that the world saw during his life. Diderot did not hear of these for several years, and then only,

it is said, 'with peals of laughter,' and no other practical step whatever. Of the four that have since been printed (or *re*-printed, for Naigeon's, of 1798, is the great original), no one so much as pretends either to be complete, or selected on any system. Brière's, the latest, of which alone we have much personal knowledge, is a well-printed book, perhaps better worth buying than any of the others; yet without arrangement, without coherence, purport; often lamentably in need of commentary; on the whole, in reference to the wants and specialties of this time, as good as *un*edited. Brière seems, indeed, to have hired some person, or thing, to play the part of Editor; or rather more things than one, for they sign themselves Editors in the plural number; and from time to time, throughout the work, some asterisk attracts us to the bottom of the leaf, and to some printed matter subscribed 'Edits.': but unhappily the journey is for most part in vain; in the course of a volume or two, we learn too well that nothing is to be gained there; that the Note, whatever it professedly treat of, will, in strict logical speech, mean only as much as to say: 'Reader! thou perceivest that we Editors, to the number of at least two, are alive, and if we had any information would impart it to thee.—Edits.' For the rest, 'these 'Edits.' are polite people; and with this uncertainty (as to their being persons or things) clearly before them, continue, to all appearance, in moderately good spirits.

One service they, or Brière for them (if, indeed, Brière is not himself they, as we sometimes surmise), have accomplished for us: sought out and printed the long-looked-for, long-lost *Life of Diderot* by Naigeon. The lovers of biography had for years sorrowed over this concealed Manuscript, with a wistfulness from which hope had nigh fled. A certain Naigeon, the beloved disciple of Diderot, had (if his own word, in his own editorial Preface, was to be credited) written a Life of him; and, alas! whither was it now vanished? Surely all that was dark in Denis the Fatalist had there been illuminated: nay, was there not, probably, a glorious 'Light-Street' carried through that whole Literary Eighteenth Century? And was not Diderot, long belauded

as 'the most encyclopedical head that perhaps ever existed,' now to show himself as such, in—the new Practical Encyclopedia, philosophic, economic, speculative, digestive, of LIFE, in threescore and ten Years, or Volumes? Diderot, too, was known as the vividest, noblest talker of his time: considering all that Boswell, with his slender opportunities, had made of Johnson, what was there we had not a right to expect!

By Brière's endeavour, as we said, the concealed Manuscript of Naigeon now lies, as published Volume, on this desk. Alas, a written *life*, too like many an acted life, where hope is one thing, fulfilment quite another! Perhaps, indeed, of all biographies ever put together by the hand of man, this of Naigeon's is the most uninteresting. Foolish Naigeon! We wanted to see and know how it stood with the bodily man, the clothed, boarded, bedded, working and warfaring Denis Diderot, in that Paris of his; how he looked and lived, what he did, what he said: had the foolish Biographer so much as told us what colour his stockings were! Of all this, beyond a date or two, not a syllable, not a hint; nothing but a dull, sulky, snuffling, droning, interminable lecture on Atheistic Philosophy; how Diderot came upon Atheism, how he taught it, how true it is, how inexpressibly important. Singular enough, the zeal of the *devil's* house had eaten Naigeon up. A man of coarse, mechanical, perhaps intrinsically rather feeble intellect; and then, with the vehemence of some pulpit-drumming 'Gowkthrapple,' or 'precious Mr. Jabesh Rentowel,'—only that *his* kirk is of the *other* complexion! Yet must he too see himself in a wholly backsliding world, where much theism and other scandal still rules; and many times Gowkthrapple Naigeon be tempted to weep by the streams of Babel. Withal, however, he is *wooden;* thoroughly mechanical, as if Vaucanson himself had made him; and that singularly tempers his fury. Let the reader, finally, admire the bounteous produce of this Earth, and how one element bears nothing but the other matches it: here have we not the truest *odium theologicum*, working quite *demono*logically, in a worshipper of the Everlasting Nothing! So much for Naigeon; what we looked for from him, and what we have got.

Must Diderot then be given up to oblivion, or remembered not as Man, but merely as Philosophic-Atheistic Logic-Mill? Did not Diderot live, as well as think? An Amateur reporter in some of the Biographical Dictionaries declares that he heard him talk one day, in nightgown and slippers, for the space of two hours, concerning earth, sea and air, with a fulgorous impetuosity almost beyond human, rising from height to height, and at length finish the climax by 'dashing his nightcap against the wall.' Most readers will admit this to be biography: we, alas, must say, it comprises nearly all about the Man Diderot that hitherto would abide with us.

Here, however, comes 'Paulin, Publishing-Bookseller,' with a quite new contribution: a long series of Letters, extending over fifteen years; unhappily only love-letters, and from a married sexagenarian; yet still letters from his own hand. Amid these insipid floods of *tendresse, sensibilité* and so forth, vapid, like long-decanted small-beer, many a curious biographic trait comes to light; indeed, we can hereby see more of the individual Diderot, and his environment, and method of procedure there, than by all the other books that have yet been published of him. Forgetting or conquering the species of nausea that such a business, on the first announcement of it, may occasion, and in many of the details of it cannot but confirm, the biographic reader will find this well worth looking into. Nay, is it not something, of itself, to see that Spectacle of the Philosophe in Love, or at least zealously endeavouring to fancy himself so? For scientific purposes a considerable tedium, of 'noble sentiment,' and even worse things, can be undergone. How the most encyclopedical head that perhaps ever existed, now on the borders of his grand climacteric, and already provided with wife and child, comports himself in that trying circumstance of preternuptial (and indeed, at such age, and with so many 'indigestions,' almost preternatural) devotion to the queens of this earth, may, by the curious in science, who have nerves for it, be here seen. There is besides a lively *Memoir* of him by Mademoiselle Diderot, though too brief, and not very true-looking. Finally, in one large Volume, his *Dream of D'Alembert*, greatly regretted and

commented upon by Naigeon; which we could have done without. For its bulk, that little *Memoir* by Mademoiselle is the best of the whole. Unfortunately, indeed, as hinted, Mademoiselle, resolute of all things to be *piquante*, writes, or rather *thinks*, in a smart, antithetic manner, nowise the fittest for clearness or credibility: without suspicion of voluntary falsehood, there is no appearance that this is a camera-lucida picture, or a portrait drawn by legitimate rules of art. Such resolution to be piquant is the besetting sin of innumerable persons of both sexes, and wofully mars any use there might otherwise be in their writing or their speaking. It is, or was, the fault specially imputed to the French: in a woman and Frenchwoman, who besides has much to tell us, it must even be borne with. And now, from these diverse scattered materials, let us try how coherent a figure of Denis Diderot, and his earthly Pilgrimage and Performance, we can piece together.

In the ancient Town of Langres, in the month of October 1713, it begins. Fancy Langres, aloft on its hill-top, amid Roman ruins, nigh the sources of the Saone and of the Marne, with its coarse substantial houses, and fifteen thousand inhabitants, mostly engaged in knife-grinding; and one of the quickest, clearest, most volatile and susceptive little figures of that century, just landed in the World there. In this French Sheffield, Diderot's Father was a Cutler, master of his craft; a much-respected and respect-worthy man; one of those ancient craftsmen (now, alas! nearly departed from the earth, and sought, with little effect, by idyllists, among the 'Scottish peasantry' and elsewhere) who, in the school of practice, have learned not only skill of hand, but the far harder skill of head and of heart; whose whole knowledge and virtue, being by necessity a knowledge and virtue to *do* somewhat, is true, and has stood trial: humble modern patriarchs, brave, wise, simple; of worth rude but unperverted, like genuine unwrought silver, native from the mine! Diderot loved his father, as he well might, and regrets on several occasions that he was painted in holiday clothes, and not in the workday costume of

his trade, 'with apron and grinder's-wheel, and spectacles pushed up,'—even as he lived and laboured, and honestly made good for himself the small section of the Universe he pretended to occupy. A man of strictest veracity and integrity was this ancient master; of great insight and patient discretion, so that he was often chosen umpire and adviser; of great humanity, so that one day crowds of poor were to 'follow him with tears to his long home.' An outspoken Langres neighbour gratified the now fatherless Philosopher with this saying: 'Ah, Monsieur Diderot, you are a famous man, but you will never be your father's equal.' Truly, of all the wonderful illustrious persons that come to view in the biographic part of these six-and-twenty Volumes, it is a question whether this old Langres Cutler is not the worthiest; to us no other suggests himself whose worth can be admitted, without lamentable pollutions and defacements to be deducted from it. The Mother also was a loving-hearted, just woman: so Diderot might account himself well-born; and it is a credit to the man that he always, were it in the circle of kings and empresses, gratefully did so.

The Jesuits were his schoolmasters: at the age of twelve the encyclopedical head was 'tonsured.' He was quick in seizing, strong in remembering and arranging; otherwise flighty enough; fond of sport, and from time to time getting into trouble. One grand event, significant of all this, he has himself commemorated; his Daughter records it in these terms:

'He had chanced to have a quarrel with his comrades: it had been serious enough to bring on him a sentence of exclusion from college on some day of public examination and distribution of prizes. The idea of passing this important time at home, and grieving his parents, was intolerable; he proceeded to the college-gate; the porter refused him admittance; he presses in while some crowd is entering, and sets off running at full speed; the porter gets at him with a sort of pike he carried, and wounds him in the side: the boy will not be driven back; arrives, takes the place that belonged to him: prizes of all sorts, for composition, for memory, for poetry, he obtains them all. No doubt he had deserved

them ; since even the resolution to punish him could not withstand the sense of justice in his superiors. Several volumes, a number of garlands had fallen to his lot ; being too weak to carry them all, he put the garlands round his neck, and with his arms full of books, returned home. His mother was at the door ; and saw him coming through the public square in this equipment, and surrounded by his school-fellows : one should be a mother to conceive what she must have felt. He was feasted, he was caressed : but next Sunday, in dressing him for church, a considerable wound was found on him, of which he had not so much as thought of complaining.'

'One of the sweetest moments of my life,' writes Diderot himself of this same business, with a slight variation, 'was more than thirty years ago, and I remember it like yesterday, when my Father saw me coming home from the college, with my arms full of prizes that I had carried off, and my shoulders with the garlands they had given me, which, being too big for my brow, had let my head slip through them. Noticing me at a distance, he threw down his work, hastened to the door to meet me, and could not help weeping. It is a fine sight, a true man and rigorous falling to weep.'

Mademoiselle, in her quick-sparkling way, informs us, nevertheless, that the school-victor, getting tired of pedagogic admonitions and inflictions, whereof there were many, said 'one morning' to his father, 'that he meant to give up school!' —"Thou hadst rather be a cutler, then?"—"With all my heart."—They handed him an apron, and he placed himself beside his father. He spoiled whatever he laid hands on; penknives, whittles, blades of all kinds. It went on for four or five days ; at the end of which he rose, proceeded to his room, got his books there, and returned to college,—and having, it would appear, in this simple manner sown his college wild-oats, never stirred from it again.

To the Reverend Fathers, it seemed that Denis would make an excellent Jesuit ; wherefore they set about coaxing and courting, with intent to crimp him. Here, in some minds, a certain comfortable reflection on the diabolic cunning and assiduity of these Holy Fathers, now happily all dissolved and expelled, will suggest itself. Along with which, may another

melancholy reflection no less be in place : namely, that these Devil-serving Jesuits should have shown a skill and zeal in their teaching vocation, such as no Heaven-serving body, of what complexion soever, anywhere on our earth now exhibits. To decipher the talent of a young vague Capability, who must one day be a man and a Reality ; to take him by the hand, and train him to a spiritual trade, and set him up in it, with tools, shop and good-will, were doing him in most cases an unspeakable service,—on this one proviso, it is true, that the trade be a just and honest one ; in which proviso surely there should lie no hindrance to such service, but rather a help. Nay, could many a poor Dermody, Hazlitt, Heron, Derrick and such like, have been trained to be a good Jesuit, were it greatly worse than to have lived painfully as a bad Nothing at-all ? But indeed, as was said, the Jesuits are dissolved ; and Corporations of all sorts have perished (from corpulence) ; and now, instead of the seven corporate selfish spirits, we have the four-and-twenty millions of discorporate selfish ; and the rule, *Man, mind thyself*, makes a jumble and a scramble, and crushing press (with dead-pressed figures, and dismembered limbs enough) ; into whose dark chaotic depths (for human Life is ever unfathomable) one shudders to look. Loneliest of all, weakest and worst-bested, in that world-scramble, is the extraordinary figure known in these times as Man of Letters ! It appears to be indubitable that this state of matters will alter and improve itself,—in a century or two. But to return :

'The Jesuits,' thus sparkles Mademoiselle, 'employed the temptation, which is always so seductive, of travelling and of liberty ; they persuaded the youth to quit his home, and set forth with a Jesuit, to whom he was attached. Denis had a friend, a cousin of his own age ; he entrusted his secret to him, wishing that he should accompany them. But the cousin, a tamer and discreeter personage, discovered the whole project to the father ; the day of departure, the hour, all was betrayed. My grandfather kept the strictest silence ; but before going to sleep he carried off the keys of the street-door ; and at midnight, hearing his son descend, he presented himself

before him, with the question, "Whither bound, at such an hour?" "To Paris," replied the young man, "where I am to join the Jesuits."—"That will not be to-night; but your desires shall be fulfilled: let us in the first place go to sleep."

'Next morning his father engaged two places in the public conveyance, and carried him to Paris, to the College d'Harcourt. He settled the terms of his little establishment, and bade his son good-bye. But the worthy man loved his child too well to leave him without being quite satisfied about his situation: he had the constancy to stay a fortnight longer, killing the time, and dying of tedium, in an inn, without seeing the sole object he was delaying for. At the end, he proceeded to the College; and my father has often told me that this proof of tenderness would have made him go to the end of the world, if the old man had required it. "Friend," said he, "I am come to know if your health keeps good; if you are content with your superiors, with your diet, with others and with yourself. If you are not well, if you are not happy, we will go back again to your mother. If you like better to remain here, I have but to speak a word with you, to embrace you, and give you my blessing." The youth assured him that he was perfectly content, that he liked his new abode very much. My grandfather then took leave of him, and went to the Principal, to know if he was satisfied with his pupil.'

On which side also the answer proving favourable, the worthy father returned home. Denis saw little more of him; never again residing under his roof; though for many years, and to the last, a proper intercourse was kept up; not, as appears, without a visit or two on the son's part, and certainly with the most unwearied, prudent superintendence and assistance on the father's. Indeed, it was a worthy family, that of the Diderots; and a fair degree of natural affection must be numbered among the virtues of our Philosophe. Those scenes about rural Langres, and the old homely way of life there, as delineated fictitiously in the *Entretien d'un Père avec ses Enfans*, and now more fully, as matter of fact, in this just-published *Correspondence*, are of a most innocent, cheerful, peacefully-secluded character; more pleasing, we might almost say more poetical, than could elsewhere be gathered out of Diderot's whole Writings. Denis was the eldest of the

family, and much looked up to, with all his shortcomings: there was a Brother, who became a clergyman; and a true-hearted, sharp-witted Sister, who remained unmarried, and at times tried to live in partnership with this latter,—rather unsuccessfully. The Clergyman being a conscientious, even strait-laced man, and Denis such as we know, they had, naturally enough, their own difficulties to keep on brotherly terms; and indeed, at length abandoned the task as hopeless. The Abbé stood rigorous by his Breviary, from time to time addressing solemn monitions to the lost Philosophe, who also went on his way. He is somewhat snarled at by the Denisian side of the house for this; but surely without ground: it was his virtue rather; at lowest his destiny. The true Priest, who could, or should, look peaceably on an *Encyclopédie*, is yet perhaps waited for in the world; and of all false things, is not a false Priest the falsest?

Meanwhile Denis, at the College d'Harcourt, learns additional Greek and Mathematics, and quite loses taste for the Jesuit career. Mad pranks enough he played, we doubt not; followed by reprimands. He made several friends, however; got intimate with the Abbé Bernis, Poet at that time, afterwards Cardinal. 'They used to dine together, for six sous a-piece, at the neighbouring *Traiteur's;* and I have often heard him vaunt the gaiety of these repasts.'

'His studies being finished,' continues Mademoiselle, 'his father wrote to M. Clement de Ris, a Procureur at Paris, and his countryman, to take him as boarder, that he might study Jurisprudence and the Laws. He continued here two years; but the business of *actes* and *inventaires* had few charms for him. All the time he could steal from the office-desk was employed in prosecuting Latin and Greek, in which he thought himself still imperfect; Mathematics, which he to the last continued passionately fond of; Italian, English, &c. In the end he gave himself up so completely to his taste for letters, that M. Clement thought it right to inform his father how ill the youth was employing his time. My grandfather then expressly commissioned M. Clement to urge and constrain him to make choice of some profession, and once for all to become Doctor, Procureur, or Advocate. My father

begged time to think of it; time was given. At the end of several months these proposals were again laid before him: he answered that the profession of Doctor did not please him, for he could not think of killing anybody; that the Procureur business was too difficult to execute with delicacy; that he would willingly choose the profession of Advocate, were it not that he felt an invincible repugnance to occupy himself all his life with other people's business. "But," said M. Clement, "what *will* you be then?"—"On my word, nothing, nothing whatever (*Ma foi, rien, mais rien du tout*). I love study; I am very happy, very content, and want nothing else."'

Here clearly is a youth of spirit, determined to take the world on the broadside, and eat thereof and be filled. His decided turn, like that of so many others, is for the trade of sovereign prince, in one shape or other; unhappily, however, the capital and outfit to set it up is wanting. Under which circumstances, nothing remains but to instruct M. Clement de Ris that no board-wages will henceforth be paid, and the young sovereign may, at his earliest convenience, be turned out of doors.

What Denis, perched aloft in his own hired attic, may have thought of it now, does not appear. The good old Father, in stopping his allowance, had reasonably enough insisted on one of two things: either that he should betake him to some intelligible method of existence, wherein all help should be furnished him; or else return home within the week. Neither of which could Denis think of doing. A similar demand continued to be reiterated for the next ten years, but always with the like none-effect. King Denis, in his furnished attic, with or without money to pay for it, was now living and reigning, like other kings, 'by the grace of God;' and could nowise resolve to abdicate. A sanguineous, vehement, volatile mortal; young, and in so wide an earth, it seemed to him next to impossible but he must find gold-mines there. He lived, while victual was to be got, taking no thought for the morrow. He had books, he had merry company, a whole piping and dancing Paris round him; he could teach Mathematics, he could turn himself so many ways; nay, might not he be-

come a Mathematician one day; a glorified Savant, and strike the stars with his sublime head! Meanwhile he is like to be overtaken by one of the sharpest of human calamities, 'cleanness of teeth.'

'One Shrove-Tuesday morning, he rises, gropes in his pocket; he has not wherewith to dine; will not trouble his friends who have not invited him. This day, which in childhood he had so often passed in the middle of relations who adored him, becomes sadder by remembrance: he cannot work; he hopes to dissipate his melancholy by a walk; goes to the Invalides, to the Courts, to the Bibliothèque du Roi, to the Jardin des Plantes. You may drive away tedium; but you cannot give hunger the slip. He returns to his quarters; on entering he feels unwell; the landlady gives him a little toast and wine; he goes to bed. "That day," he has often said to me, "I swore that, if ever I came to have anything, I would never in my life refuse a poor man help, never condemn my fellow-creature to a day as painful."'

That Diderot, during all this period, escaped starvation, is plain enough by the result: but how he specially accomplished that, and the other business of living, remains mostly left to conjecture. Mademoiselle, confined at any rate within narrow limits, continues as usual too intent on sparkling: is *brillante* and *pétillante*, rather than lucent and illuminating. How inferior, for *seeing* with, is your brightest train of fireworks to the humblest farthing candle! Who Diderot's companions, friends, enemies, patrons were, what his way of life was, what the Paris he lived in and from his garret looked down on was, we learn only in hints, dislocated, enigmatic. It is in general to be impressed on us, that young Denis, as a sort of spiritual swashbuckler, who went about conquering Destiny, in light rapier-fence, by way of amusement; or at lowest, in reverses, gracefully insulting her with mock reverences,—lived and acted like no other man; all which being freely admitted, we ask, with small increase of knowledge, How he did act then?

He gave lessons in Mathematics, we find; but with the princeliest indifference as to payment: 'was his scholar lively, and prompt of conception, he sat by him teaching all day;

did he chance on a blockhead, he returned not back. They paid him in books, in movables, in linen, in money, or not at all; it was quite the same.' Farther, he made Sermons, to order; as the Devil is said to quote Scripture: a Missionary bespoke half-a-dozen of him (of Denis, that is) for the Portuguese Colonies, and paid for them very handsomely at fifty crowns each. Once a family Tutorship came in his way, with tolerable appointments, but likewise with incessant duties: at the end of three months, he waits upon the house-father with this abrupt communication: "I am come, Monsieur, to request you to seek a new tutor; I cannot remain with you any longer."—"But, Monsieur Diderot, what is your grievance? Have you too little salary? I will double it. Are you ill-lodged? Choose your apartment. Is your table ill-served? Order your own dinner. All will be cheap to parting with you."—"Monsieur, look at me: a citron is not so yellow as my face. I am making men of your children; but every day I am becoming a child with them. I feel a hundred times too rich and too well off in your house; yet I must leave it: the object of my wishes is not to live better, but to keep from dying."

Mademoiselle grants that, if sometimes 'drunk with gaiety,' he was often enough plunged in bitterness; but then a Newtonian problem, a fine thought, or any small godsend of that sort, would instantly cheer him again. The 'gold-mines' had not yet come to light. Meanwhile, between him and starvation we can still discern Langres covertly stretching out its hand. Of any Langres man, coming in his way, Denis frankly borrows; and the good old Father refuses not to pay. The Mother is still kinder, at least softer: she sends him direct help, as she can; not by the post, but by a serving-maid, who travelled these sixty leagues on foot; delivered him a small sum from his mother; and, without mentioning it, added all her own savings thereto. This Samaritan journey she performed three times. 'I saw her some years ago,' adds Mademoiselle; 'she spoke of my father with tears; her whole desire was to see him again: sixty years' service had impaired neither her sense nor her sensibility.'

It is granted also that his company was 'sometimes good, sometimes indifferent, not to say bad.' Indeed, putting all things together, we can easily fancy that the last sort was the preponderating. It seems probable that Denis, during these ten years of probation, walked chiefly in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom; now swilling from full Circe-goblets, now snuffing with haggard expectancy the hungry wind; always 'sorely flamed-on from the neighbouring hell.' In some of his fictitious writings, a most intimate acquaintance with the nether world of Polissons, Escrocs, Filles de Joie, Maroufles, Maquerelles, and their ways of doing, comes to light: among other things (as may be seen in *Jacques le Fataliste*, and elsewhere), a singular theoretic expertness in what is technically named 'raising the wind;' which miracle, indeed, Denis himself is expressly (in this *Mémoire*) found once performing, and in a style to require legal cognisance, had not the worthy Father 'sneered at the dupe, and paid.' The dupe here was a proselytising Abbé, whom the dog glozed with professions of life-weariness and turning monk; which all evaporated, once the money was in his hands. On other occasions, it might turn out otherwise, and the gudgeon-fisher hook some shark of prey.

Literature, except in the way of Sermons for the Portuguese Colonies, or other the like small private dealings, had not yet opened her hospitable bosom to him. Epistles, precatory and amatory, for such as had more cash than grammar, he may have written; Catalogues also, Indexes, Advertisements, and, in these latter cases, even seen himself in print. But now he ventures forward, with bolder step, towards the interior mysteries, and begins producing Translations from the English. Literature, it is true, was then, as now, the universal free-hospital and Refuge for the Destitute, where all mortals, of what colour and kind soever, had liberty to live, or at least to die: nevertheless, for an enterprising man, its resources at that time were comparatively limited. Newspapers were few; Reporting existed not, still less the inferior branches, with their fixed rate per line: Packwood and Warren, much more Panckouke and Colburn, as yet slumbered

(the last century of their slumber) in the womb of Chaos; Fragmentary Panegyric-literature had not yet come into being, therefore could not be paid for. Talent wanted a free staple and workshop, where wages might be certain; and too often, like virtue, was praised and left starving. Lest the reader overrate the munificence of the literary cornucopia in France at this epoch, let us lead him into a small historical scene, that he may see with his own eyes. Diderot is the historian; the date too is many years later, when times, if anything, were mended:

'I had given a poor devil a manuscript to copy. The time he had promised it at having expired, and my man not appearing, I grow uneasy; set off to hunt him out. I find him in a hole the size of my hand, almost without daylight, not the wretchedest tatter of serge to cover his walls; two straw-bottom chairs, a flock-bed, the coverlet chiselled with worms, without curtains; a trunk in a corner of the chimney, rags of all sorts hooked above it; a little white-iron lamp, with a bottle for pediment to it; on a deal shelf, a dozen of excellent books. I chatted with him three-quarters of an hour. My gentleman was naked as a worm' (*nu comme un ver:* it was August); 'lean, dingy, dry, yet serene, complaining of nothing, eating his junk of bread with appetite, and from time to time caressing his beloved, who reclined on that miserable truckle, taking up two-thirds of the room. If I had not known that happiness resides in the soul, my Epictetus of the Rue Hyacinthe might have taught it me.'

Notwithstanding all which, Denis, now in his twenty-ninth year, sees himself necessitated to fall desperately, and over head and ears, in love. It was a virtuous, pure attachment; his first of that sort, probably also his last. Readers who would see the business poetically delineated, and what talent Diderot had for such delineations, may read this scene in the once-noted Drama of the *Père de Famille.* It is known that he drew from the life; and with few embellishments, which too, except in the French Theatre, do not beautify.

'Act I. Scene 7.

Saint-Albin. Father, you shall know all. Alas! how else can I move you?—The first time I ever saw her was at church. She was on her knees at the foot of the altar, beside an aged woman, whom I took for her mother. Ah father! what modesty, what charms! . . . . Her image followed me by day, haunted me by night, left me rest nowhere. I lost my cheerfulness, my health, my peace. I could not live without seeking to find her. . . . . She has changed me; I am no longer what I was. From the first moment all shameful desires fade away from my soul; respect and admiration succeed them. Without rebuke or restraint on her part, perhaps before she had raised her eyes on me, I became timid; more so from day to day; and soon I felt as little free to attempt her virtue as her life.

The Father. And who are these women? How do they live?

Saint-Albin. Ah! if you knew it, unhappy as they are! Imagine that their toil begins before day, and often they have to continue it through the night. The mother spins on the wheel; hard coarse cloth is between the soft small fingers of Sophie, and wounds them.[1] Her eyes, the brightest eyes in this world, are worn at the light of a lamp. She lives in a garret, within four bare walls; a wooden table, a couple of chairs, a truckle-bed, that is their furniture. O Heavens, when ye fashioned such a creature, was this the lot ye destined her!

The Father. And how got you access? Speak me truth.

Saint-Albin. It is incredible what obstacles I had, what I surmounted. Though now lodged there, under the same roof, I at first did not seek to see them: if we met on the stairs, coming up, going down, I saluted them respectfully. At night, when I came home (for all day I was supposed to be at my work), I would go knock gently at their door; ask them for the little services usual among neighbours,—as water, fire, light. By degrees they grew accustomed to me; rather took to me. I offered to serve them in little things; for instance, they disliked going out at night; I fetched and carried for them.'

[1] The real trade appears to have been a 'sempstress one in laces and linens:' the poverty is somewhat exaggerated; otherwise the shadow may be faithful enough.

The real truth here is, "I ordered a set of shirts from them; said I was a Church-licentiate just bound for the Seminary of St. Nicholas,—and, above all, had the tongue of the old serpent." But to skip much, and finish:

'Yesterday I came as usual: Sophie was alone; she was sitting with her elbows on the table, her head leant on her hand; her work had fallen at her feet. I entered without her hearing me: she sighed. Tears escaped from between her fingers, and ran along her arms. For some time, of late, I had seen her sad. Why was she weeping? What was it that grieved her? Want it could no longer be; her labour and my attentions provided against that. Threatened by the only misfortune terrible to me, I did not hesitate: I threw myself at her knees. What was her surprise! Sophie, said I, you weep; what ails you? Do not hide your trouble from me: speak to me; oh speak to me! She spoke not. Her tears continued flowing. Her eyes, where calmness no longer dwelt, but tears and anxiety, bent towards me, then turned away, then turned to me again. She said only, Poor Sergi! unhappy Sophie!—I had laid my face on her knees; I was wetting her apron with my tears.'

In a word, there is nothing for it but marriage. Old Diderot, joyous as he was to see his Son once more, started back in indignation and derision from such a proposal; and young Diderot had to return to Paris, and be forbid the beloved house, and fall sick, and come to the point of death, before the fair one's scruples could be subdued. However, she sent to get news of him; 'learnt that his room was a perfect dog-kennel, that he lay without nourishment, without attendance, wasted, sad: thereupon she took her resolution; mounted to him, promised to be his wife; and mother and daughter now became his nurses. So soon as he recovered, they went to Saint-Pierre, and were married at midnight (1744).' It only remains to add, that if the Sophie whom he had wedded fell much short of this Sophie whom he delineates, the fault was less in her qualities, than in his own unstable fancy: as in youth she was 'tall, beautiful, pious and wise,' so through a long life she seems to have approved herself a woman of cour-

age, discretion, faithful affection ; far too good a wife for such a husband.

'My father was of too jealous a character to let my mother continue a traffic, which obliged her to receive strangers and treat with them : he begged her therefore to give up that business ; she was very loth to consent ; poverty did not alarm her on her own account, but her mother was old, unlikely to remain with her long, and the fear of not being able to provide for all her wants was afflicting : nevertheless, persuading herself that this sacrifice was for her husband's happiness, she made it. A char-woman looked in daily, to sweep their little lodging, and fetch provisions for the day; my mother managed all the rest. Often when my father dined or supped out, she would dine or sup on bread ; and took a great pleasure in the thought that, next day, she could double her little ordinary for him. Coffee was too considerable a luxury for a household of this sort ; but she could not think of his wanting it, and every day gave him six sous to go and have his cup, at the Café de la Régence, and see the chess-playing there.

'It was now that he translated the *History of Greece* in three volumes '(by the English Stanyan) ; 'he sold it for a hundred crowns. This sum brought a sort of supply into the house. . .

'My mother had been brought to bed of a daughter : she was now big a second time. In spite of her precautions, solitary life, and the pains she had taken to pass off her husband as her brother, his family, in the seclusion of their province, learnt that he was living with two women. Directly the birth, the morals, the character of my mother became objects of the blackest calumny. He foresaw that discussions by letter would be endless ; he found it simpler to put his wife into the stage-coach, and send her to his parents. She had just been delivered of a son ; he announced this event to his father, and the departure of my mother. "She set out yesterday," said he ; "she will be with you in three days. You will say to her what shall please you, and send her back when you are tired of her." Singular as this sort of explanation was, they determined, in any case, on sending my father's sister to receive her. Their first welcome was more than cold : the evening grew less painful to her : but next morning betimes she went in to her father-in-law ; treated him as if he had been her own father ; her respect and her caresses charmed the good, sensi-

ble old man. Coming down stairs, she began working: refused nothing that could please a family whom she was not afraid of, and wished to be loved by. Her conduct was the only excuse she gave for her husband's choice: her appearance had prepossessed them in her favour; her simplicity, her piety, her talents for household economy secured her their tenderness; they promised her that my father's disinheritment should be revoked. They kept her three months; and sent her back loaded with whatever they could think would be useful or agreeable to her.'

All this is beautiful, told with a graceful simplicity; the beautiful, real-ideal prose-idyl of a Literary Life: but, alas, in the music of your prose-idyl there lurks ever an accursed dissonance (or the players make one); where men are, there will be mischief. 'This journey,' writes Mademoiselle, 'cost my mother many tears.' What will the reader say, when he finds that Monsieur Diderot has, in the interim, taken up with a certain Madame de Puisieux; and welcomes his brave Wife (worthy to have been a true man's) with a heart and bosom henceforth estranged from her! Madame Diderot 'made two journeys to Langres, and both were fatal to her peace.' This affair of the Puisieux, for whom he despicably enough not only burned, but toiled and made money, kept him busy for some ten years; till at length, finding that she played false, he gave her up; and minor miscellaneous flirtations seem to have succeeded. But, returning from her *second* journey, the much-enduring Housemother finds him in meridian glory with one Voland, the *un*-maiden Daughter of a 'Financier's Widow;' to whom we owe this present preternuptial *Correspondence;* to whom indeed he mainly devoted himself for the rest of his life,—'parting his time between his study and her;' to his own wife and household giving little save the trouble of cooking for him, and of painfully, with repressed or irrepressible discontent, keeping up some appearance of terms with him. Alas! alas! and his Puisieux seems to have been a hollow mercenary (to whose scandalous soul he reckons obscenest of Books fit nutriment); and the Voland an elderly spinster, with *cœur sensible, cœur honnête, ame tendre*

et bonne! And then those old dinings on bread; the six sous spared for his cup of coffee! Foolish Diderot, scarcely pardonable Diderot! A hard saying is this, yet a true one: Scoundrelism signifies injustice, and should be left to scoundrels alone. For thy wronged wife, whom thou hadst sworn far other things to, ever in her afflictions (here so hostilely scanned and written of) a true sympathy will awaken; and sorrow that the patient, or even impatient, endurances of such a woman should be matter of speculation and self-gratulation to such another.

But looking out of doors now, from an indifferently-guided Household, which must have fallen shamefully in pieces, had not a wife been wiser and stronger than her husband,—we find the Philosophe making distinct way with the Bibliopolic world; and likely, in the end, to pick up a kind of living there. The Stanyan's *History of Greece;* the other English-translated, nameless *Medical Dictionary,* are dropped by all editors as worthless; a like fate might, with little damage, have overtaken the *Essai sur le Mérite et la Vertu,* rendered or redacted out of Shaftesbury's *Characteristics.* In which redaction, with its Notes, of anxious Orthodoxy, and bottomless Falsehood looking through it, we individually have found nothing, save a confirmation of the old twic-erepeated experience, That in Shaftesbury's famed Book there lay, if any meaning, a meaning of such long-windedness, circumvolution and lubricity, that, like an eel, it must forever slip through our fingers, and leave us alone among the gravel. One reason may partly be, that Shaftesbury was not only a Sceptic but an Amateur Sceptic; which sort a darker, more earnest, have long since swallowed and abolished. The meaning of a delicate, perfumed, gentlemanly individual standing there, in that war of Titans (hill meeting hill with all its woods), and putting out hand to it—with a pair of tweezers?

However, our Denis has now emerged from the intermediate Hades of Translatorship into the Heaven of perfected Authorship: empties his commonplace book of *Pensées Philosophiques* (it is said in the space of four days); writes his Metaphysico-Baconian phantasmagories on the *Interprétation*

de la Nature (an endless business to 'interpret'); and casts the money-produce of both into the lap of his Scarlet-woman Puisieux. Then forthwith, for the same object, in a shameful fortnight, puts together the beastliest of all past, present or future dull Novels; a difficult feat, unhappily not an impossible one. If any mortal creature, even a Reviewer, be again compelled to glance into that Book, let him bathe himself in running water, put on change of raiment, and be unclean until the even. As yet the Metaphysico-Atheistic *Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets*, and *Lettre sur les Aveugles*, which brings glory and a three-months lodging in the Castle of Vincennes, are at years' distance in the background. But already by his gilded tongue, growing repute and sanguine projecting temper, he has persuaded Booksellers to pay-off the Abbé Gua, with his lean Version of *Chambers's Dictionary of Arts*, and convert it into an *Encyclopédie*, with himself and D'Alembert for Editors: and is henceforth (from the year of grace 1751) a duly dis-indentured *Man of Letters*, an indisputable and more and more conspicuous member of that surprising guild.

Literature, ever since its appearance in our European world, especially since it emerged out of Cloisters into the open Market-place, and endeavoured to make itself room, and gain a subsistence there, has offered the strangest phases, and consciously or unconsciously done the strangest work. Wonderful Ark of the Deluge, where so much that is precious, nay priceless to mankind, floats carelessly onwards through the Chaos of distracted Times,—if so be it may one day find an Ararat to rest on, and see the waters abate! The History of Literature, especially for the last two centuries, is our proper Church History; the other Church, during that time, having more and more decayed from its old functions and influence, and ceased to have a history. And now, to look only at the outside of the matter, think of the Tassos and older or later Racines, struggling to raise their office from its pristine abasement of court-jester; and teach and elevate the World, in conjunction with that other quite heteroclite task of solacing and glorifying some *Pullus Jovis*, in plush cloak and other gilt or golden king-tackle, that they in the interim might live

thereby! Consider the Shakspeares and Molières, plying a like trade, but on a double material; glad of any royal or noble patronage, but eliciting, as their surer stay, some fractional contribution from the thick-skinned, many-pocketed million. Saumaises, now bully-fighting 'for a hundred gold Jacobuses,' now closeted with Queen Christinas, who blow the fire with their own queenly mouth, to make a pedant's breakfast; anon cast forth (being scouted and confuted), and dying of heartbreak, coupled with henpeck. Then the Laws of Copyright, the Quarrels of Authors, the Calamities of Authors; the Heynes dining on boiled peasecods, the Jean Pauls on water; the Johnsons bedded and boarded on fourpence-halfpenny a-day. Lastly the unutterable confusion worse confounded of our present Periodical existence; when, among other phenomena, a young Fourth Estate (whom all the three elder may try if they can hold) is seen sprawling and staggering tumultuously through the world; as yet but a huge, rawboned, lean *calf;* fast growing, however, to be a Pharaoh's lean cow,—of whom let the fat kine beware! All this of the mere exterior, or dwelling-place of Literature, not yet glancing at the internal, at the Doctrines emitted or striven after, will the future Eusebius and Mosheim have to record; and (in some small degree) explain to us what it means. Unfathomable is its meaning: Life, mankind's Life, ever from its unfathomable fountains, rolls wondrous on, another though the same; in Literature too, the seeing eye will distinguish Apostles of the Gentiles, Proto- and Deutero-martyrs; still less will the Simon Magus, or Apollonius with the golden thigh be wanting. But all now is on an infinitely *wider scale;* the elements of it all swim far-scattered, and still only striving towards union; —whereby, indeed, it happens that to the most, under this new figure, they are unrecognisable.

French Literature, in Diderot's time, presents itself in a certain state of culmination, where causes long prepared are rapidly becoming effects; and was doubtless in one of its more notable epochs. Under the Economic aspect, in France, as in England, this was the Age of Booksellers; when, as a Dodsley and Miller could risk capital in an *English Dictionary,* a

Lebreton and Briasson could become purveyors and commissariat-officers for a French *Encyclopédie*. The world forever loves Knowledge, and would part with its last sixpence in payment thereof: this your Dodsleys and Lebretons well saw; moreover they could act on it, for as yet PUFFERY was not. Alas, offences must come; Puffery from the first was inevitable: woe to them, nevertheless, by whom it did come! Meanwhile, as we said, it slept in Chaos; the Word of man and tradesman was still partially credible to man. Booksellers were therefore a possible, were even a necessary class of mortals, though a strangely anomalous one; had they kept from lying, or lied with any sort of moderation, the anomaly might have lasted still longer. For the present, they managed in Paris as elsewhere: The Timberheaded could perceive that for Thought the world would give money; farther, by mere shopkeeper cunning, that true Thought, as in the end sure to be recognised, and by nature infinitely more durable, was better to deal in than false; farther, by credible tradition of public consent, that such and such had the talent of furnishing true Thought (say rather *truer*, as the more correct word): on this hint the Timberheaded spake and bargained. Nay, let us say he bargained, and worked, for most part with industrious assiduity, with patience, suitable prudence; nay, sometimes with touches of generosity and magnanimity, beautifully irradiating the circumambient mass of greed and dulness. For the rest, the two high contracting parties roughed it out as they could; so that if Booksellers, in their back-parlour Valhalla, drank wine out of the skulls of Authors (as they were fabled to do), Authors, in the front-apartments, from time to time, gave them a Rowland for their Oliver: a Johnson can knock his Osborne on the head, like any other Bull of Bashan; a Diderot commands his corpulent Panckouke to "Leave the room, and go the devil; *Allez au diable, sortez de chez moi!*"

Under the internal or Doctrinal aspect, again, French Literature, we can see, knew far better what it was about than English. That fable, indeed, first set afloat by some Trevoux Journalist of the period, and which has floated foolishly enough into every European ear since then, of there being an Associa-

tion specially organised for the destruction of government, religion, society, civility (not to speak of tithes, rents, life and property), all over the world ; which hell-serving Association met at the Baron d'Holbach's, there had its blue-light sederunts, and published Transactions legible to all,—was and remains nothing but a fable. Minute-books, president's hammer, ballot-box, punch-bowl of such Pandemonium have not been produced to the world. The sect of Philosophes existed at Paris, but as other sects do ; held together by loosest, informal, unrecognised ties ; within which every one, no doubt, followed his own natural objects, of proselytism, of glory, of getting a livelihood. Meanwhile, whether in constituted association or not, French Philosophy resided in the persons of the French Philosophes ; and, as a mighty deep-struggling Force, was at work there. Deep-struggling, irrepressible ; the subterranean fire, which long heaved unquietly, and shook all things with an ominous motion, was here, we can say, forming itself a decided spiracle ;—which, by and by, as French Revolution, became that volcano-crater, world-famous, world-appalling, world-maddening, as yet very far from closed ! Fontenelle said, he wished he could live sixty years longer, and see what that universal infidelity, depravity and dissolution of all ties would turn to. In three-score years Fontenelle might have seen strange things ; but not the end of the phenomenon perhaps in three hundred.

Why France became such a volcano-crater, what specialties there were in the French national character, and political, moral, intellectual condition, by virtue whereof French Philosophy there and not elsewhere, then and not sooner or later, evolved itself,—is an inquiry that has been often put, and cheerfully answered ; the true answer of which might lead us far. Still deeper than this *Whence* were the question of *Whither ;*—with which, also, we intermeddle not here. Enough for us to understand that there verily a Scene of Universal History is being enacted, a little living TIME-picture in the bosom of ETERNITY ;—and, with the feeling due in that case, to ask not so much Why it is, as What it is. Leaving priorities and posteriorities aside, and cause-and-effect to adjust it-

self elsewhere, conceive so many vivid spirits thrown together into the Europe, into the Paris of that day, and see how they demean themselves, what they work out and attain there.

As the *mystical* enjoyment of an object goes infinitely farther than the *intellectual*, and we can *look* at a picture with delight and profit, after all that we can be *taught* about it is grown poor and wearisome; so here, and by far stronger reason, these light Letters of Diderot to the Voland, again unveiling and *showing* Parisian Life, are worth more to us than many a heavy tome laboriously struggling to explain it. True, we have seen the picture, that same Parisian life-picture, ten times already; but we can look at it an eleventh time: nay this, as we said, is not a canvas-picture, but a life-picture, of whose significance there is no end for us. Grudge not the elderly Spinster her existence then; say not she has lived in vain. For what of History there is, in this Preternuptial Correspondence, should we not endeavour to forgive and forget all else, the *sensibilité* itself? The curtain which had fallen for almost a century is again drawn up; the scene is alive and busy. Figures grown historical are here seen face to face, and again live before us.

A strange theatre that of French Philosophism; a strange dramatic corps! Such another corps for brilliancy and levity, for gifts and vices, and all manner of sparkling inconsistencies, the world is not like to see again. There is Patriarch Voltaire, of all Frenchmen the most French; he whom the French had, as it were, long waited for, 'to produce at once, in a single life, all that French genius most prized and most excelled in;' of him and his wondrous ways, as of one known, we need say little. Instant enough to 'crush the Abomination, *écraser l'Infâme*,' he has prosecuted his Jesuit-hunt over many lands and many centuries, in many ways, with an alacrity that has made him dangerous, and endangered him: he now sits at Ferney, withdrawn from the active toils of the chase; cheers-on his hunting-dogs mostly from afar: Diderot, a beagle of the first vehemence, he has rather to restrain. That all extant and possible Theology be abolished, will not content the fell Denis, as surely it might have

done; the Patriarch must address him a friendly admonition on his Atheism, and make him eat it again.

D'Alembert too we may consider as one known; of all the Philosophe fraternity, him who in speech and conduct agrees best with our English notions: an independent, patient, prudent man; of great faculty, especially of great clearness and method; famous in Mathematics; no less so, to the wonder of some, in the intellectual provinces of Literature. A foolish wonder; as if the Thinker could think only on one thing, and not on *any* thing he had a call towards. D'Alembert's *Mélanges*, as the impress of a genuine spirit, in peculiar position and probation, have still instruction for us, both of head and heart. The man lives retired here, in questionable seclusion with his Espinasse; incurs the suspicion of apostasy, because in the *Encyclopédie*, he saw no Evangel and celestial Revelation, but only a huge Folio Dictionary; and would not venture life and limb on it without a 'consideration.' Sad was it to Diderot to see his fellow-voyager make for port, and disregard signals, when the sea-krakens rose round him! They did not quarrel; were always friendly when they met, but latterly met only at the rate of 'once in the two years.' D'Alembert died when Diderot was on his deathbed: "My friend," said the latter to the news-bringer, "a great light is gone out."

Hovering in the distance, with woe-struck, minatory air, stern-beckoning, comes Rousseau. Poor Jean Jacques! Alternately deified, and cast to the dogs; a deep-minded, high-minded, even noble, yet wofully misarranged mortal, with all misformations of Nature intensated to the verge of madness by unfavourable Fortune. A lonely man; his life a long soliloquy! The wandering Tiresias of the time;—in whom, however, did lie prophetic meaning, such as none of the others offer. Whereby indeed it might partly be that the world went to such extremes about him; that, long after his departure, we have seen one whole nation worship him, and a Burke, in the name of another, class him with the offscourings of the earth. His true character, with its lofty aspirings and poor performings; and how the spirit of the man worked

so wildly, like celestial fire in a thick dark element of chaos, and shot forth ethereal radiance, all-piercing lightning, yet could not illuminate, was quenched and did not conquer: this, with what lies in it, may now be pretty accurately appreciated. Let his history teach all whom it concerns, to '*harden* themselves against the ills which Mother Nature will try them with;' to seek within their own soul what the world must forever deny them; and say composedly to the Prince of the Power of this lower Earth and Air: Go thou thy way; I go mine!

Rousseau and Diderot were early friends: who has forgotten how Jean Jacques walked to the Castle of Vincennes, where Denis (for heretical Metaphysics, and irreverence to the Strumpetocracy) languishes in durance; and devised his first Literary Paradox on the road thither? Their Quarrel, which, as a fashionable hero of the time complains, occupied all Paris, is likewise famous enough. The reader recollects that heroical epistle of Diderot to Grimm on that occasion, and the sentence: 'Oh, my friend, let us continue virtuous; for the state of those who have ceased to be so makes me shudder.' But is the reader aware what the fault of him 'who has ceased to be so' was? A series of ravelments and squabbling grudges, 'which,' says Mademoiselle with much simplicity, 'the Devil himself could not understand.' Alas, the Devil well understood it, and Tyrant Grimm too did, who had the ear of Diderot, and poured into it his own unjust, almost abominable spleen. Clean paper need not be soiled with a foul story, where the main actor is only 'Tyran le Blanc;' enough to know that the continually virtuous Tyrant found Diderot 'extremely impressionable;' so poor Jean Jacques must go his ways (with both the scath and the scorn), and among his many woes bear this also. Diderot is not blamable; pitiable rather; for who would be a pipe, which not Fortune only, but any Sycophant may play tunes on?

Of this same Tyrant Grimm desiring to speak peaceably we shall say little. The man himself is less remarkable than his fortune. Changed times indeed, since the threadbare German Bursch quitted Ratisbon, with the sound of catcalls in his ears,

the condemned 'Tragedy, *Banise*,' in his pocket; and fled southward, on a thin travelling-tutorship;—since Rousseau met you, Herr Grimm, 'a young man described as seeking a situation, and whose appearance indicated the pressing necessity he was in of soon finding one!' Of a truth, you have flourished since then, Herr Grimm: his introductions of you to Diderot, to Holbach, to the black-locked D'Epinay, where not only you are wormed-in, but he is wormed-out, have turned to somewhat; the Threadbare has become well-napped and got ruffles and jewel-rings, and walks abroad in sword and bagwig, and lackers his brass countenance with rouge, and so (as *Tyran le Blanc*) recommends himself to the fair; and writes Parisian Philosophe-gossip to the Hyperborean Kings, and his 'Grimm's Leaves,' copied 'to the number of twenty,' are bread of life to many; and cringes here, and domineers there; and lives at his ease in the Creation, in an effective *tendresse* with the D'Epinay, husband or custom of the country not objecting!—Poor Börne, the new German Flying-Sansculotte, feels his mouth water, at Paris, over these flesh-pots of Grimm: reflecting with what heart he too could write 'Leaves,' and be fed thereby. Börne, my friend, those days are done! While Northern Courts were a 'Lunar Versailles,' it was well to have an Uriel stationed in their Sun there; but of all spots in this Universe (hardly excepting Tophet) Paris now is the one we at court could best *dispense* with news from; never more, in these centuries, will a Grimm be missioned thither; never a 'Leaf of Börne' be blown courtwards by any wind. As for the Grimm, we can see that he was a man made to rise in the world: a fair, even handsome outfit of talent, wholly marketable; skill in music, and the like, encyclopedical readiness in all ephemera: saloon-wit, a trenchant, unhesitating head; above all, a heart ever in the right place,—in the market-place, namely, and marked 'for sale to the highest bidder.' Really a methodical, adroit, managing man. By 'hero-worship,' and the cunning appliance of alternate sweet and sullen, he has brought Diderot to be his patient milk-cow, whom he can milk an Essay from, a Volume from, when he lists. Victorious Grimm! He even escaped

those same 'horrors of the French Revolution' (with loss of his ruffles); and was seen at the Court of Gotha, sleek and well to live, within the memory of man.

The world has heard of M. le Chevalier de Saint-Lambert; considerable in Literature, in Love and War. He is here again, singing the frostiest Pastorals; happily, however, only in the distance, and the jingle of his wires soon dies away. Of another Chevalier, worthy Jaucourt, be the name mentioned, and little more: he digs unweariedly, mole-wise, in the Encyclopedic field, catching what he can, and shuns the light. Then there is Helvetius, the well-fed Farmer-general, enlivening his sybaritic life with metaphysic paradoxes. His revelations *De l'Homme* and *De l'Esprit* breathe the freest Philosophe-spirit, with Philanthropy and Sensibility enough: the greater is our astonishment to find him here so ardent a Preserver of the Game:

'This Madame de Nocé, writes Diderot, treating of the Bourbonne Hot-springs, 'is a neighbour of Helvetius. She told us, the Philosopher was the unhappiest man in the world on his estates. He is surrounded there by neighbours and peasants who detest him. They break the windows of his mansion, plunder his grounds by night, cut his trees, throw down his walls, tear up his spiked paling. He dare not go to shoot a hare, without a train of people to guard him. You will ask me, How it has come to pass? By a boundless zeal for his game. M. Fagon, his predecessor, used to guard the grounds with two keepers and two guns. Helvetius has twenty-four, and cannot do it. These men have a small premium for every poacher they can catch; and there is no sort of mischief they will not cause to get more and more of these. Besides, they are themselves so many hired poachers. Again, the border of his woods was inhabited by a set of poor people, who had got huts there; he has caused all the huts to be swept away. It is these, and such acts of repeated tyranny, that have raised him enemies of all kinds; and the more insolent, says Madame de Nocé, as they have discovered that the worthy Philosopher is a coward. I would not have his fine estate of Voré as a present, had I to live there in these perpetual alarms. What profits he draws from that mode of management I know not: but he is alone there; he is hated, he is in fear. Ah! how

much wiser was our lady Geoffrin ; when speaking of a lawsuit that tormented her, she said to me, "Get done with my lawsuit ; they want money ? I have it. Give them money. What better use can I make of my money than to buy peace with it ?" In Helvetius's place, I would have said, "They kill me a few hares and rabbits, let them be doing. These poor creatures have no shelter but my forest, let them stay there." I should have reasoned like M. Fagon, and been adored like him.'

Alas ! are not Helvetius's preserves, at this hour, all broken up, and lying desecrated ? Neither can the others, in what latitude and longitude soever, remain eternally impregnable. But if a Rome was once saved by geese, need we wonder that an England is lost by partridges ? We are sons of Eve, who bartered Paradise for an apple.

But to return to Paris and its Philosophe Church-militant. Here is a Marmontel, an active subaltern thereof, who fights in a small way, through the *Mercure ;* and, in rose-pink romance-pictures, strives to celebrate the 'moral sublime.' An Abbé Morellet, busy with the Corn-Laws, walks in at intervals, stooping, shrunk together, 'as if to get nearer himself, *pour être plus près de lui-même.*' The rogue Galiani alternates between Naples and Paris ; Galiani, by good luck, has 'forever *settled* the question of the Corn-Laws :' an idle fellow otherwise ; a spiritual Lazzarone ; full of frolics, wanton quips, anti-jesuit *gesta,* and wild Italian humour ; the sight of his swart, sharp face is the signal for Laughter,—in which, indeed, the Man himself has unhappily evaporated, leaving no result behind him.

Of the Baron d'Holbach thus much may be said, that both at Paris and at Grandval he gives good dinners. His two or three score volumes of Atheistic Philosophism, which he published (at his own expense), may now be forgotten and even forgiven. A purse open and deep, a heart kindly-disposed, quiet, sociable, or even friendly ; these, with excellent wines, gain him a literary elevation, which no thinking faculty he had could have pretended to. An easy, laconic gentleman ; of grave politeness ; apt to lose temper at play ; yet, on the

whole, good-humoured, eupeptic and eupractic: there may he live, and let live.

Nor is heaven's last gift to man wanting here; the natural sovereignty of women. Your Châtelets, Epinays, Espinasses, Geoffrins, Deffands, will play their part too: there shall, in all senses, be not only Philosophers, but Philosophesses. Strange enough is the figure these women make: good souls, it was a strange world for them. What with metaphysics and flirtation, system of nature, fashion of dress-caps, vanity, curiosity, jealousy, atheism, rheumatism, *traités*, *bouts-rimés*, noble-sentiments, and rouge-pots,—the vehement female intellect sees itself sailing on a chaos, where a wiser might have wavered if not foundered. For the rest (as an accurate observer has remarked), they become a sort of Lady-Presidents in that society; attain great influence; and, imparting as well as receiving, communicate to all that is done or said somewhat of their own peculiar tone.

In a world so wide and multifarious, this little band of Philosophes, acting and speaking as they did, had a most various reception to expect; votes divided to the uttermost. The mass of mankind, busy enough with their own work, of course heeded them only when forced to do it; these, meanwhile, form the great neutral element, in which the battle has to fight itself; the two hosts, according to their several success, to recruit themselves. Of the Higher Classes, it appears, the small proportion not wholly occupied in eating and dressing, and therefore open to such question, are in their favour,—strange as to us it may seem; the spectacle of a Church pulled down is, in stagnant times, amusing; nor do the generality, on either side, yet see whither ulteriorly it is tending. The Reading World, which was then more than now the intelligent, inquiring world, reads eagerly (as it will ever do) whatsoever skilful, sprightly, reasonable-looking word is written for it; enjoying, appropriating the same; perhaps without fixed judgment, or deep care of any kind. Careful enough, fixed enough, on the other hand, is the Jesuit Brotherhood; in these days sick unto death; but only the

bitterer and angrier for that. Dangerous are the death-convulsions of an expiring Sorbonne, ever and anon filling Paris with agitation : it behooves your Philosophe to walk wearily, and, in many a critical circumstance, to weep with the one cheek, and smile with the other. Nor is Literature itself wholly Philosophe : apart from the Jesuit regulars, in their Trevoux Journals, Sermons, Episcopal Charges, and other camps or casemates, a considerable Guerilla or Reviewer force (consisting, as usual, of smugglers, unemployed destitute persons, deserters who have been refused promotion, and other the like broken characters) has organised itself, and maintains a harassing bush-warfare : of these the chieftain is Frèron, once in tolerable repute with the world, had he not, carrying too high a head, struck his foot on stones, and stumbled. By the continual depreciating of talent grown at length undeniable, he has sunk low enough : Voltaire, in the *Ecossaise*, can bring him on the stage, and have him killed by laughter, under the name, sufficiently recognisable, of *Wasp* (in French, *Frelon*). Another Empecedor, still more hateful, is Palissot, who has written and got acted a Comedy of *Les Philosophes*, at which the Parisians, spite of its dulness, have also laughed. To laugh at *us*, the so meritorious us! Heard mankind ever the like? For poor Palissot, had he fallen into Philosophe hands, serious bodily tar-and-feathering might have been apprehended : as it was, they do what the pen, with its gall and copperas, can ; invoke Heaven and Earth to witness the treatment of divine Philosophy ;—with which view, in particular, friend Diderot seems to have composed his *Rameau's Nephew*, wherein Palissot and others of his kidney are (figuratively speaking) mauled and mangled, and left not in dog's likeness. So divided was the world, Literary, Courtly, Miscellaneous, on this matter : it was a confused anomalous time.

Among its more notable anomalies may be reckoned the relations of French Philosophism to Foreign Crowned Heads. In Prussia there is a Philosophe King ; in Russia a Philosophe Empress : the whole North swarms with kinglets and queenlets of the like temper. Nay, as we have seen, they

entertain their special ambassador in Philosophedom, their lion's-provider to furnish spiritual Philosophe-provender; and pay him well. The great Frederic, the great Catherine are as nursing-father and nursing-mother to this new Church of Antichrist; in all straits, ready with money, honourable royal asylum, help of every sort,—which, however, except in the money-shape, the wiser of our Philosophes are shy of receiving. Voltaire had tried it in the asylum-shape, and found it unsuitable; D'Alembert and Diderot decline repeating the experiment. What miracles are wrought by the arch-magician Time! Could these Frederics, Catherines, Josephs, have looked forward some three-score years; and beheld the Holy Alliance in conference at Laybach! But so goes the world: kings are not seraphic doctors, with gift of prescience, but only men, with common eyesight, participating in the influences of their generation: kings too, like all mortals, have a certain love of knowledge; still more infallibly, a certain desire of applause; a certain delight in mortifying one another. Thus what is persecuted here finds refuge there; and ever, one way or other, the New works itself out full-formed from under the Old; nay the Old, as in this instance, sits sedulously hatching a cockatrice that will one day devour it.

No less anomalous, confused and contradictory is the relation of the Philosophes to their own Government. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, their relation to Society being still so undecided; and the Government, which might have endeavoured to adjust and preside over this, being itself in a state of anomaly, death-lethargy and doting decrepitude? The true conduct and position for a French Sovereign towards French Literature, in that country might have been, though perhaps of all things the most important, one of the most difficult to discover and accomplish. What chance was there that a thick-blooded Louis Quinze, from his *Parc aux Cerfs*, should discover it, should have the faintest inkling of it? His 'peaceable soul' was quite otherwise employed. Minister after Minister must consult his own several insight, his own whim, above all his own ease: and so the whole business, now when we look on it, comes out one of the most botched, pie-

bald, inconsistent, lamentable and even ludicrous objects in the history of State-craft. Alas, necessity has no *law:* the statesman, without light, perhaps even without eyes, whom Destiny nevertheless constrains to 'govern' his nation in a time of World-Downfall, what shall he do, but if so may be, collect the taxes; prevent in some degree, murder and arson; and for the rest, wriggle hither and thither, return upon his steps, clout up old rents and open new,—and, on the whole, eat his victuals, and let the Devil govern it? Of the pass to which Statesmanship had come in respect of Philosophism, let this one fact be evidence instead of a thousand. M. de Malesherbes writes to warn Diderot that, next day, he will give orders to have all his papers seized.—Impossible! answers Diderot: *juste ciel!* how shall I sort them, where shall I hide them, within four-and-twenty hours? *Send them to me*, answers M. de Malesherbes! Thither accordingly they go, under lock and seal: and the hungry catchpoles find nothing but empty drawers.

The *Encyclopédie* was set forth first 'with approbation and *Privilège du Roi;*' next, it was stopped by Authority; next, the public murmuring, suffered to proceed; then again, positively for the last time, stopped,—and, no whit the less printed, and written, and circulated, under thin disguises some hundred and fifty printers working at it with open doors, all Paris knowing of it, only Authority winking hard. Choiseul, in his resolute way, had now shut the eyes of Authority, and kept them shut. Finally, to crown the whole matter, a copy of the prohibited Book lies in the King's private library: and owes favour, and a withdrawal of the prohibition, to the foolishest accident:

'One of Louis Fifteenth's domestics told me,' says Voltaire, 'that once, the King his master supping, in private circle (*en petite compagnie*), at Trianon, the conversation turned first on the chase, and from this on gunpowder. Some one said that the best powder was made of sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal, in equal parts. The Duc de la Vallière, with better knowledge, maintained that for good powder there must be one part of

sulphur, one of charcoal, with five of saltpetre, well filtered, well evaporated, well crystallised.

'"It is pleasant," said the Duc de Nivernois, "that we who daily amuse ourselves with killing partridges in the Park of Versailles, and sometimes with killing men, or getting ourselves killed, on the frontiers, should not know what that same work of killing is done with."

'"Alas! we are in the like case with all things in this world," answered Madame de Pompadour: "I know not what the rouge I put upon my cheeks is made of; you would bring me to a nonplus, if you asked how the silk hose I wear are manufactured." "'Tis a pity," said the Duc de la Vallière, "that his Majesty confiscated our *Dictionnaires Encyclopédiques*, which cost us our hundred pistoles; we should soon find the decision of all our questions there." The King justified the act of confiscation; he had been informed that these twenty-one folio volumes, to be found lying on all ladies' toilettes, were the most pernicious things in the world for the kingdom of France; he had resolved to look for himself if this were true, before suffering the book to circulate. Towards the end of the repast, he sends three of his valets to bring him a copy; they enter, struggling under seven volumes each. The article *powder* is turned up; the Duc de la Vallière is found to be right: and soon Madame de Pompadour learns the difference between the old *rouge d'Espagne* with which the ladies of Madrid coloured their cheeks, and the *rouge des dames* of Paris. She finds that the Greek and Roman ladies painted with a purple extracted from the *murex*, and that consequently our scarlet is the purple of the ancients; and that there is more purple in the *rouge d'Espagne*, and more cochineal in that of France. She learns how stockings are woven; the stocking-frame described there fills her with amazement. "Ah, what a glorious book!" cried she. "Sire, did you confiscate this magazine of all useful things, that you might have it wholly to yourself, then, and be the one learned man in your kingdom?" Each threw himself on the volumes, like the daughters of Lycomedes on the jewels of Ulysses; each found forthwith whatever he was seeking. Some who had lawsuits were surprised to see the decision of them there. The King reads there all the rights of his crown. "Well, in truth (*mais vraiment*)," said he, "I know not why they said so much ill of the book." "Ah, sire," said the Duc de Nivernois, "does not your Majesty see," &c. &c.'

In such a confused world, under such unheard-of circumstances, must friend Diderot ply his editorial labours. No sinecure is it! Penetrating into all subjects and sciences; waiting and rummaging in all libraries, laboratories; nay, for many years, fearlessly diving into all manner of workshops, unscrewing stocking-looms, and even working thereon (that the department of *Arts and Trades* might be perfect); then seeking out contributors, and flattering them, quickening their laziness, getting payment for them; quarrelling with Bookseller and Printer: bearing all miscalculations, misfortunes, misdoings of so many fallible men (for there all at last lands) on his single back: surely this was enough, without having farther to do battle with the beagles of Office, perilously withstand them, expensively sop them, toilsomely elude them! Nevertheless, he perseveres, and will not but persevere;—less, perhaps, with the deliberate courage of a Man, who has compared result and outlay, than with the passionate obstinacy of a Woman, who, having made up her mind, will shrink at no ladder of ropes, but ride with her lover, though all the four Elements gainsay it. At every new concussion from the Powers, he roars; say rather, shrieks, for there is a female shrillness in it; proclaiming, Murder! Robbery! Rape! invoking men and angels; meanwhile proceeds unweariedly with the printing. It is a hostile building up, not of the Holy Temple at Jerusalem, but of the Unholy one at Paris: thus must Diderot, like Ezra, come to strange extremities; and every workman works with his trowel in one hand, in the other his weapon of war, that so, in spite of all Tiglaths, the work go on, and the topstone of it be brought out with shouting.

Shouting! Ah, what faint broken quaver is that in the shout; as of a man that shouted with the throat only, and inwardly was bowed down with dispiritment? It is Diderot's faint broken quaver; he is sick and heavy of soul. Scandalous enough: the Goth Lebreton, loving as he says, his head better even than his profit, has for years gone privily at dead of night to the finished Encyclopedic proof-sheets, and there with nefarious pen scratched out whatever to *him*

seemed dangerous ; filling up the gap as *he* could, or merely letting it fill itself up. Heaven and Earth ! Not only are the finer Philosophe sallies mostly cut out,—but hereby has the work become a sunken, hitching, ungainly mass, little better than a monstrosity. Goth ! Hun ! sacrilegious Attila of the book-trade ! Oh, surely for this treason the hottest of Dante's Purgatory were too temperate. Infamous art thou, Lebreton, to all ages — that read the *Encyclopédie ;* and Philosophes not yet in swaddling clothes shall gnash their teeth over thee, and spit upon thy memory. — Lebreton pockets both the abuse and the cash, and sleeps sound in a whole skin. The able Editor could never be said to get entirely the better of it while he lived.

Now, however, it is time that, quitting generalities, we go, in this fine autumn weather, to Holbach's at Grandval, where the hardworked but unwearied Encyclopedist, with plenty of ink and writing-paper, is sure to be. Ever in the Holbach household, his arrival is a holiday ; if a quarrel spring up, it is only because he will not come, or too soon goes away. A man of social talent, with such a tongue as Diderot's, in a mansion where the only want to be guarded against was that of wit, could not be other than welcome. He composes Articles there, and walks, and dines, and plays cards, and talks ; languishingly waits letters from his Voland, copiously writes to her. It is in these copious love-despatches that the whole matter is so graphically painted, we have an Asmodeus' view of the interior life there, and live it over again with him. The Baroness, in red silk tempered with snow-white gauze, is beauty and grace itself ; her old Mother is a perfect romp of fifteen, or younger ; the house is lively with company ; the Baron, as we said, speaks little, but to the purpose ; is seen sometimes with his pipe, in dressing-gown and red slippers ; otherwise the best of landlords. Remarkable figures drop in : generals disabled at Quebec ; fashionable gentlemen rusticating in the neighbourhood ; Abbés, such as Galiani, Raynal, Morellet ; perhaps Grimm and his Epinay ; other Philosophes and Philosophesses. Guests too of less dignity, acting rather as butts

than as bowmen: for it is the part of every one either to have wit, or to be the cause of having it.

Among these latter, omitting many, there is one whom, for country's sake, we must particularise: an ancient personage, named Hoop (Hope), whom they called *Père* Hoop; by birth a Scotchman. Hoop seems to be a sort of fixture at Grandval, not bowman, therefore butt; and is shot at for his lodging. A most shrivelled, wind-dried, dyspeptic, chill-shivering individual; Professor of Life-weariness; sits dozing there,—dozes there, however, with one eye open. He submits to be called *Mummy*, without a shrug; cowers over the fire, at the warmest corner. Yet is there a certain sardonic subacidity in Père Hoop; when he slowly unlocks his leathern jaw, we hear him with a sort of pleasure. Hoop has been in various countries and situations; in that croaking metallic voice of his, can tell a distinct story. Diderot apprehended he would one day hang himself; if so, what Museum now holds his remains? The Parent Hoops, it would seem, still dwelt in the city of Edinburgh; he, the second son, as Bordeaux Merchant, having helped them thither, out of some proud Manorhouse no longer weather-tight. Can any ancient person of that city give us trace of such a man? It must be inquired into. One only of Father Hoop's reminiscences we shall report, as the highest instance on record of a national virtue: At the battle of Prestonpans, a kinsman of Hoop's, a gentleman with gold rings on his fingers, stands fighting and fencing for life with a rough Highlander; the Highlander, by some clever stroke, whisks the jewelled hand clear off, and then—picks it up from the ground, sticks it in his sporran for future leisure, and fights on! The force of *vertue* [1] could no farther go.

It cannot be uninteresting to the general reader to learn, that in the last days of October, in the year of grace 1770, Denis Diderot over-ate himself (as he was in the habit of doing), at Grandval; and had an obstinate 'indigestion of

[1] *Virtus* (properly *manliness*, the chief duty of man) meant, in old Rome, *power of fighting;* means, in modern Rome, *connoisseurship;* in Scotland, *thrift.*—ED.

bread.' He writes to Grimm that it is the worst of all indigestions: to his fair Voland that it lay more than fifteen hours on his stomach, with a weight like to crush the life out of him; would neither *remonter* nor *descendre;* nor indeed stir a hairsbreath for warm water, *de quelque côté que je la* (the warm water) *prisse.*

Clysterium donare,
Ensuita purgare!

Such things, we grieve to say, are of frequent occurence; the Holbachian table is all-too plenteous; there are cooks too, we know, who boast of their diabolic ability to cause the patient, by successive intensations of their art, to eat with new and ever new appetite, till he explode on the spot. Diderot writes to his fair one, that his clothes will hardly button, that he is thus 'stuffed' and thus; and so indigestion succeeds indigestion. Such Narratives fill the heart of sensibility with amazement; nor to the woes that chequer this imperfect, cacogastric state of existence is the tear wanting.

The society at Grandval cannot be accounted very dull: nevertheless let no man regretfully compare it with any neighbourhood he may have drawn by lot, in the present day; or even with any no-neighbourhood, if that be his affliction. The gaiety at Grandval was of the kind that could not last. Were it not that some Belief is left in Mankind, how could the sport of emitting Unbelief continue? On which ground, indeed, Swift, in his masterly argument 'Against abolishing the Christian Religion,' urges, not without pathos, that innumerable men of wit, enjoying a comfortable status by virtue of jokes on the Catechism, would hereby be left without pabulum, the staff of life cut away from their hand. The Holbachs were blind to this consideration; and joked away, as if it would last forever. So too with regard to Obscene Talk: where were the merit of a riotous Mother-in-law saying and doing, in public, these never-imagined scandals, had not a cunningly-devised fable of Modesty been set afloat; were there not some remnants of Modesty still extant among the unphilosophic classes? The Samoeids (according to Travellers)

have few double meanings; among stall cattle the witty effect of such is lost altogether. Be advised, then, foolish old woman! 'Burn not thy bed;' the light of *it* will soon go out, and then?—Apart from the common household topics, which the 'daily household epochs' bring with them everywhere, two main elements, we regret to say, come to light in the conversation at Grandval; these, with a spicing of Noble-sentiment, are, unfortunately, Blasphemy and Bawdry. Whereby, at this distance, the whole matter grows to look poor and effete; and we can honestly rejoice that it all *has* been, and need not be again.

But now, hastening back to Paris, friend Diderot finds proof-sheets enough on his desk, and notes, and invitations, and applications from distressed men of letters; nevertheless runs over, in the first place, to seek news from the Voland; will then see what is to be done. He writes much; talks and visits much: besides the Savans, Artists, spiritual Notabilities, domestic or migratory, of the period, he has a liberal allowance of unnotable Associates; especially a whole bevy of young or oldish, mostly rather spiteful Women; in whose gossip he is perfect. We hear the rustling of their silks, the clack of their pretty tongues, tittle-tattle 'like their pattens when they walk;' and the sound of it, fresh as yesterday, through this long vista of Time, has become significant, almost prophetic. Life could not hang heavy on Diderot's hands: he is a vivid, open, all-embracing creature; could have found occupation anywhere; has occupation here forced on him, enough and to spare. 'He had much to do, and did much of his own,' says Mademoiselle; 'yet three-fourths of his life were employed in helping whosoever had need of his purse, of his talents, of his management: his study, for the five-and-twenty years I knew it, was like a well-frequented shop, where, as one customer went, another came.' He could not find in his heart to refuse any one. He has reconciled Brothers, sought out Tutorages, settled Lawsuits; solicited Pensions; advised, and refreshed hungry Authors, instructed ignorant ones: he has written advertisements for incipient helpless Grocers; he once wrote the dedication (to a pious

Duc d'Orleans) of a lampoon against himself,—and so raised some five-and-twenty gold louis for the famishing lampooner. For all these things, let not the light Diderot want his reward with us! Other reward, except from himself, he got none; but often the reverse: as in his little Drama, *La Pièce et le Prologue*, may be seen humorously and good-humouredly set forth under his own hand. Indeed, his clients, by a vast majority, were of the scoundrel species; in any case, Denis knew well, that to expect gratitude, is to deserve ingratitude.—'Rivière well contented' (here Mademoiselle) 'now thanks my father, both for his services and his advices; sits chatting another quarter of an hour, and then takes leave; my father shows him down. As they are on the stairs, Rivière stops, turns round, and asks: "M. Diderot, are you acquainted with Natural History?"—"Why, a little; I know an aloe from a sago, a pigeon from a colibri."—"Do you know the history of the *Formica leo?*"—"No."—"It is a little insect of great industry: it digs a hole in the ground like a reversed funnel; covers the top with fine light sand; entices foolish insects to it; takes them, sucks them, then says to them: M. Diderot, I have the honour to wish you good day." My father stood laughing like to split at this adventure.'

Thus, amid labour and recreation; questionable Literature, unquestionable Loves; eating and digesting, better or worse; in gladness and vexation of spirit, in laughter ending in sighs, does Diderot pass his days. He has been hard toiled, but then well flattered, and is nothing of a hypochondriac. What little service renown can do him, may now be considered as done: he is in the centre of the literature, science, art of his nation; not numbered among the Academical Forty, yet in his heterodox heart entitled to be almost proud of the exclusion; successful in Criticism, successful in Philosophism, nay, highest of sublunary glories, successful in the Theatre; vanity may whisper, if she please, that, excepting the unattainable Voltaire alone, he is the first of Frenchmen. High heads are in correspondence with him the low-born; from Catherine the Empress to Philidor the Chess-player, he is in honoured relation with all manner of men; with scientific Buffons, Eulers,

D'Alemberts; with artistic Falconnets, Vanloos, Riccobonis, Garricks. He was ambitious of being a Philosophe; and now the whole fast-growing sect of Philosophes look up to him as their head and mystagogue. To Denis Diderot, when he stept out of the Langres Diligence at the College d'Harcourt; or afterwards, when he walked in the subterranean shades of Rascaldom, with uneasy steps over the burning marle, a much smaller destiny would have seemed desirable. Within doors, again, matters stand rather disjointed, as surely they might well do: however, Madame Diderot is always true and assiduous; if one Daughter talk enthusiastically, and at length (though her father has written the *Religieuse*) die mad in a convent, the other, a quick, intelligent, graceful girl, is waxing into womanhood, and takes after the father's Philosophism, leaving the mother's Piety far enough aside. To which elements of mixed good and evil from without, add this so incalculably favourable one from within, that of all literary men Diderot is the least a self-listener; none of your puzzling, repenting, forecasting, earnest-bilious temperaments, but sanguineous-lymphatic every fibre of him, living lightly from hand to mouth, in a world mostly painted rose-colour.

The *Encyclopédie*, after nigh thirty years of endeavour, to which only the Siege of Troy may offer some faint parallel, is finished. Scattered Compositions of all sorts, printed or manuscript, making many Volumes, lie also finished; the Philosophe has reaped no golden harvest from them. He is getting old: can live out of debt, but is still poor. Thinking to settle his daughter in marriage, he must resolve to sell his Library; money is not otherwise to be raised. Here, however, the Northern Cleopatra steps imperially forward; purchases his Library for its full value; gives him a handsome pension, as librarian to keep it for her; and pays him moreover fifty years thereof by advance in ready money. This we call imperial (in a world so necessitous as ours), though the whole munificence did not, we find, cost above three thousand pounds; a trifle to the Empress of all the Russias. In fact, it is about the sum your first-rate king eats, as board-wages, in one day; who, however, has seldom sufficient; not to

speak of charitable overplus. In admiration of his Empress, the vivid Philosophe is now louder than ever ; he even breaks forth into rather husky singing. Who shall blame him? The Northern Cleopatra (whom, in any case, he must regard with other eyes than we) has stretched out a generous helping hand to him, where otherwise there was no help, but only hindrance and injury: all men will, and should, more or less, obey the proverb, to praise the fair as their own market goes in it.

One of the last great scenes in Diderot's Life is his personal visit to this Benefactress. There is but one Letter from him with Petersburg for date, and that of ominous brevity. The Philosophe was of open, unheedful, free-and-easy disposition; Prince and Polisson were singularly alike to him: it was 'hail fellow well met,' with every Son of Adam, be his clothes of one stuff or the other. Such a man could be no court-sycophant, was ill calculated to succeed at court. We can imagine that the Neva-colic, and the character of the Neva water, were not the only things hurtful to his nerves there. For King Denis, who had dictated such wonderful anti-regalities in the Abbé Raynal's *History ;*[1] and himself, in a moment of sibylism, emitted that surprising announcement, surpassing all yet uttered or utterable in the Tyrtæan way, how

> *Ses mains* (the freeman's) *ourderaient les entrailles du prêtre,*
> *Au défaut d'un cordon, pour étrangler les rois ;*

for such a one, the climate of the Neva must have had something oppressive in it. The *entrailles du prêtre* were, indeed,

[1] "But who *dare* stand for this?" would Diderot exclaim. "I will, I!" eagerly responded the Abbé: "do but proceed." (*A la Mémoire de Diderot*, by De Meister.)—Was the following one of the passages?

'Happily these perverse instructors' of Kings 'are chastised, sooner or later, by the ingratitude and contempt of their pupils. Happily, these pupils too, miserable in the bosom of grandeur, are tormented all their life by a deep *ennui*, which they cannot banish from their palaces. Happily, the religious prejudices, which have been planted in their souls, return on them to affright them. Happily, the mournful silence of their people teaches them, from time to time, the deep hatred that is borne them. Happily, they are too cowardly to despise that hatred. Happily (*heureusement*), after a life which no mortal, not even the mean-

much at his service here, could he get clutch of them; but only for musical philosophe fiddle-strings; nowise for a *cordon!* Nevertheless, Cleopatra is an uncommon woman (or rather an uncommon man), and can put-up with many things; and, in a gentle, skilful way, make the crooked straight. As her Philosophe presents himself in common apparel, she sends him a splendid court-suit; and as he can now enter in a civilised manner, she sees him often, confers with him largely: by happy chance, Grimm too at length arrives; and the winter passes without accident. Returning home in triumph, he can express himself contented, charmed with his reception; his mineral specimens, and all manner of hyperborean memorials for friends; unheard-of things to tell; how he crossed the bottomless half-thawed Dwina, with the water boiling up round his wheels, the ice bending like leather, yet crackling like mere ice,—and shuddered, and got through safe; how he was carried, coach and all, into the ferry-boat at Mittau, on thirty wild men's backs, who floundered in the mud, and nigh broke his shoulder-blade; how he investigated Holland, and had conversed with Empresses, and High Mightinesses, and principalities and powers; and so seen, and conquered, for his own spiritual behoof, several of the Seven Wonders.

But, alas! his health is broken; old age is knocking at the gate, like an importunate creditor, who has warrant for entering. The radiant, lightly-bounding soul is now getting all dim and stiff, and heavy with sleep: Diderot too must adjust himself, for the hour draws nigh. These last years he passes retired and private, not idle or miserable. Philosophy or Philosophism has nowise lost its charm: whatsoever so much as calls itself Philosopher can interest him. Thus poor Seneca, on occasion of some new Version of his Works, having come before the public, and been roughly dealt with, Diderot, with a long, last, concentrated effort, writes his *Vie*

est of their subjects, would accept, if he knew all its wretchedness, they find black inquietude, terror and despair, seated on the pillow of their death-bed (*les noires inquiétudes, la terreur et le désespoir assis au chévet de leur lit de mort*).'—Surely, 'kings have poor times of it, to be run foul of by the like of thee!'

de Sénèque; struggling to make the hollow solid. Which, alas, after all his tinkering still sounds hollow; and notable Seneca, so wistfully desirous to stand well with Truth, and yet not ill with Nero, is and remains only our perhaps niceliest-proportioned Half-and-half, the plausiblest Plausible on record; no great man, no true man, no man at all; yet how much lovelier than such,—as the mild-spoken, tolerating charity-sermoning, immaculate Bishop Dogbolt to some rude, self-helping, sharp-tongued Apostle Paul! Under which view, indeed, Seneca (though surely erroneously, for the origin of the thing was different) has been called, in this generation, 'the father of all such as wear shovel-hats.'

The *Vie de Sénèque*, as we said, was Diderot's last effort. It remains only to be added of him, that he too died; a lingering but quiet death, which took place on the 30th of July 1784. He onces quotes from Montaigne the following, as Sceptic's viaticum: 'I plunge stupidly, head foremost, into this dumb Deep, which swallows me, and chokes me, in a moment,—full of insipidity and indolence. Death, which is but a quarter of an hour's suffering, without consequence and without injury, does not require peculiar precepts.' It was Diderot's allotment to die with all due 'stupidity:' he was leaning on his elbows; had eaten an apricot two minutes before, and answered his wife's remonstrances with: "*Mais que diable de mal veux-tu que cela me fasse?* (How the deuce can that hurt me?)" She spoke again, and he answered not. His House, which the curious will visit when they go to Paris, was in the Rue Taranne, at the intersection thereof with the Rue Saint-Benoît. The dust that was once his Body went to mingle with the common earth, in the church of Saint-Roch; his Life, the wondrous manifold Force that was in him, that was He,—returned to ETERNITY, and *is* there, and continues there!

Two things, as we saw, are celebrated of Diderot. First, that he had the most encyclopedical head ever seen in this world: second, that he talked as never man talked;—properly, as never man his admirers had heard, or as no man living

in Paris then. That is to say, his was at once the widest, fertilest, and readiest of minds.

With regard to the Encyclopedical Head, suppose it to mean that he was of such vivacity as to admit, and look upon with interest, almost all things which the circle of Existence could offer him ; in which sense, this exaggerated laudation, of Encyclopedism, is not without its fraction of meaning. Of extraordinary openness and compass we must grant the mind of Diderot to be ; of a susceptibility, quick activity ; even naturally of a depth, and in its practical realised shape, of a universality, which bring it into kindred with the highest order of minds. On all forms of this wondrous Creation he can look with loving wonder ; whatsoever thing stands there, has some brotherhood with him, some beauty and meaning for him. Neither is the faculty to see and interpret wanting ; as, indeed, this faculty to *see* is inseparable from that other faculty to *look*, from that true wish to look ; moreover (under another figure), intellect is not a *tool*, but a *hand* that can handle any tool. Nay, in Diderot we may discern a far deeper universality than that shown, or showable, in Lebreton's *Encyclopédie ;* namely, a poetical ; for, in slight gleams, this too manifests itself. A universality less of the head than of the character ; such, we say, is traceable in this man, at lowest the power to have acquired such. Your true Encyclopedical is the Homer, the Shakspeare ; every genuine Poet is a living embodied, real Encyclopedia,—in more or fewer volumes ; were his experience, his insight of details, never so limited, the whole world lies imaged as a whole within him ; whosoever has not seized the whole cannot yet speak truly (much less can he speak *musically*, which is harmoniously, *concordantly*) of any part, but will perpetually need new guidance, rectification. The fit use of such a man is as hodman ; not feeling the plan of the edifice, let him carry stones to it ; if he *build* the smallest stone, it is likeliest to be wrong, and cannot continue there.

But the truth is, as regards Diderot, this saying of the encyclopedical head comes mainly from his having edited a Bookseller's Encyclopedia, and can afford us little direction.

Looking into the man, and omitting his trade, we find him by nature gifted in a high degree with openness and versatility, yet nowise in the highest degree ; alas, in quite another degree than that. Nay, if it be meant farther that in practice, as a writer and thinker, he has taken-in the Appearances of Life and the World, and images them back with such freedom, clearness, fidelity, as we have not many times witnessed elsewhere, as we have not various times seen infinitely surpassed elsewhere,—this same encyclopedical praise must altogether be denied him. Diderot's habitual world, we must, on the contrary, say, is a half-world, distorted into looking like a whole ; it is properly, a poor, fractional, insignificant world ; partial, inaccurate, perverted from end to end. Alas, it was the destiny of the man to live as a Polemic ; to be born also in the morning-tide and first splendour of the Mechanical Era ; not to know, with the smallest assurance or continuance, that in the Universe other than a mechanical meaning could exist ; which force of destiny acting on him through his whole course, we have obtained what now stands before us ; no Seer, but only possibilities of a Seer, transient irradiations of a Seer, looking through the organs of a Philosophe.

These two considerations, which indeed are properly but one (for a thinker, especially of French birth, in the Mechanical Era, could not be other than a Polemic), must never for a moment be left out of view in judging the works of Diderot. It is a great truth, one side of a great truth, that the Man makes the Circumstances, and spiritually as well as economically is the artificer of his own fortune. But there is another side of the same truth, that the man's circumstances are the element he is appointed to live and work in ; that he by necessity takes his complexion, vesture, embodiment, from these, and is, in all practical manifestations, modified by them almost without limit ; so that in another no less genuine sense, it can be said Circumstances make the Man. Now, if it continually behoves us to insist on the former truth towards ourselves, it equally behoves us to bear in mind the latter when we judge of other men. The most gifted soul, appearing in France in the Eighteenth Century, can as little embody him-

self in the intellectual vesture of an Athenian Plato, as in the grammatical one; his thoughts can no more be Greek, than his language can. He thinks of the things belonging to the French eighteenth century, and in the dialect he has learned there; in the light, and under the conditions prescribed there. Thus, as the most original, resolute and self-directing of all the Moderns has written: 'Let a man be but born ten years sooner, or ten years later, his whole aspect and performance shall be different.' Grant, doubtless, that a certain perennial Spirit, true for all times and all countries, can and must look through the thinking of certain men, be it in what dialect soever; understand meanwhile that strictly this holds only of the highest order of men, and cannot be exacted of inferior orders; among whom, if the most sedulous, loving inspection disclose any even secondary symptoms of such a Spirit, it ought to seem enough. Let us remember well that the high-gifted, high-striving Diderot was born in the point of Time and of Space, when of all uses he could turn himself to, of all dialects speak in, this of Polemical Philosophism, and no other, seemed the most promising and fittest. Let us remember too, that no earnest Man, in any Time, ever spoke what was wholly meaningless; that, in all human convictions, much more in all human practices, there was a true side, a fraction of truth; which fraction is precisely the thing we want to extract from them, if we want anything at all to do with them.

Such palliative considerations (which, for the rest, concern not Diderot, now departed, and indifferent to them, but only ourselves who could wish to *see* him, and not to mis-see him) are essential, we say, through our whole survey of his Opinions and Proceedings, generally so alien to our own; but most of all in reference to his head Opinion, properly the source of all the rest, and more shocking, even horrible, to us than all the rest: we mean his Atheism. David Hume, dining once in company where Diderot was, remarked that he did not think there were any Atheists. "Count us," said a certain Monsieur ——— : they were eighteen. "Well," said the Monsieur ———, "it is pretty fair if you have fished out fif-

teen at the first cast ; and three others who know not what to think of it." In fact, the case was common : your Philosophe of the first water had grown to reckon Atheism a necessary accomplishment. Gowkthrapple Naigeon, as we saw, had made himself very perfect therein.

Diderot was an Atheist, then ; stranger still, a proselytising Atheist, who esteemed the creed worth earnest reiterated preaching, and enforcement with all vigour ! The unhappy man had 'sailed through the Universe of Worlds and found no Maker thereof ; had descended to the Abysses where Being no longer casts its shadow, and felt only the rain-drops trickle down ; and seen only the gleaming rainbow of Creation, which originated from no Sun ; and heard only the everlasting storm which no one governs ; and looked upwards for the DIVINE EYE, and beheld only the black, bottomless, glaring DEATH'S EYE-SOCKET :' such, with all his wide voyagings, was the philosophic fortune he had realised.

Sad enough, horrible enough : yet instead of shrieking over it, or howling and Ernulphus'-cursing over it, let us, as the more profitable method, keep our composure, and inquire a little, What possibly it may mean ? The whole phenomenon, as seems to us, will explain itself from the fact above insisted on, that Diderot was a Polemic of decided character, in the Mechanical Age. With great expenditure of words and froth, in arguments as waste, wild-weltering, delirious-dismal as the chaos they would demonstrate ; which arguments one now knows not whether to laugh at or to weep at, and almost does both,—have Diderot and his sect perhaps made this apparent to all who examine it : That in the French System of Thought (called also the Scotch, and still familiar enough everywhere, which for want of a better title we have named the Mechanical), there is no room for a Divinity ; that to him, for whom *intellect*, or the power of knowing and believing, is still synonymous with *logic*, or the mere power of arranging and communicating, there is absolutely no proof discoverable of a Divinity ; and such a man has nothing for it but either, if he be of half spirit as is the frequent case, to trim despicably all his days between two opinions ; or else, if he be of whole

spirit, to anchor himself on the rock or quagmire of Atheism, —and farther, should he see fit, proclaim to others that there is good riding there. So much may Diderot have demonstrated: a conclusion at which we nowise turn pale. Was it much to know that Metaphysical Speculation, by nature, whirls round in endless Mahlstroms, both 'creating and swallowing—itself?' For so wonderful a self-swallowing product of the Spirit of the Time, could any result to arrive at be fitter than this of the ETERNAL NO? We thank Heaven that the result *is* finally arrived at; and so now we can look out for something other and farther. But above all things, *proof* of a God? A *probable* God! The smallest of Finites struggling to *prove* to itself, that is to say if we will consider it, to picture-out and arrange as diagram, and *include* within itself, the Highest Infinite; in *which*, by hypothesis, *it* lives, and moves, and has its being! This, we conjecture, will one day seem a much more miraculous miracle than that negative result it has arrived at,—or any other result a still absurder chance might have led to it. He who, in some singular Time of the World's History, were reduced to wander about, in stooping posture, with painfully constructed sulphur-match and farthing rushlight (as Gowkthrapple Naigeon), or smoky tarlink (as Denis Diderot), searching for the Sun, and did not find it; were *he* wonderful and his failure; or the singular Time, and its having put him on that search?

Two small consequences, then, we fancy, may have followed, or be following, from poor Diderot's Atheism. First, that all speculations of the sort we call Natural Theology, endeavouring to prove the beginning of all Belief by some Belief earlier than the beginning, are barren, ineffectual, impossible; and may, so soon as otherwise it is profitable, be abandoned. Of final causes, man, by the nature of the case, can *prove* nothing; knows them, if he know anything of them, not by glimmering flint-sparks of Logic, but by an infinitely higher light of intuition; never long, by Heaven's mercy, wholly eclipsed in the human soul; and (under the name of Faith, as regards this matter) familiar to us now, historically or in conscious possession, for upwards of four thousand years. To

all open men it will indeed always be a favourite contemplation, that of watching the ways of Being, how animate adjusts itself to inanimate, rational to irrational, and this that we name Nature is not a desolate phantasm of a chaos, but a wondrous existence and reality. If, moreover, in those same 'marks of design,' as he has called them, the contemplative man find new evidence of a designing Maker, be it well for him: meanwhile, surely one would think, the still clearer evidence lay nearer home,—in the contemplative man's own head that *seeks* after such! In which point of view our extant Natural Theologies, as our innumerable Evidences of the Christian Religion, and such like, may, in reference to the strange season they appear in, have a certain value, and be worth printing and reprinting; only let us understand for whom, and how, they are valuable; and be nowise wroth with the poor Atheist, whom they have not convinced, and could not, and should not convince.

The second consequence seems to be, that this whole current hypothesis of the Universe being 'a Machine,' and then of an Architect, who constructed it, sitting as it were apart, and guiding it, and *seeing* it go,—may turn out an inanity and nonentity; not much longer tenable: with which result likewise we shall, in the quietest manner, reconcile ourselves. 'Think ye,' says Goethe, 'that God made the Universe, and then let it run round his finger (*am Finger laufen liesse*)? On the whole, that Metaphysical hurly-burly, of our poor jarring, self-listening Time, ought at length to compose itself: that seeking for a God *there*, and not *here;* everywhere outwardly in physical Nature, and not inwardly in our own Soul, where alone He is to be found by us,—begins to get wearisome. Above all, that 'faint possible Theism,' which now forms our common English creed, cannot be too soon swept out of the world. What is the nature of that individual, who with hysterical violence theoretically asserts a God, perhaps a revealed Symbol and Worship of God; and for the rest, in thought, word and conduct, meet with him where you will, is found living as if his theory were some polite figure of speech, and his theoretical God a mere distant Simulacrum, with whom

he, for his part, had nothing farther to do? Fool! The Eternal is no Simulacrum; God is not only There, but Here or nowhere, in that life-breath of thine, in that act and thought of thine,—and thou wert wise to look to it. If there is no God, as the fool hath said in his heart, then live on with thy decencies, and lip-homages, and inward greed, and falsehood, and all the hollow cunningly-devised halfness that recommends thee to the Mammon of this world: if there *is* a God, we say, look to it! But in either case, what art thou? The Atheist is false; yet is there, as we see, a fraction of truth in him; he is true compared with thee; thou, unhappy mortal, livest wholly in a lie, art wholly a lie.

So that Diderot's Atheism comes, if not to much, yet to something: we learn this from it, and from what it stands connected with, and may represent for us, That the Mechanical System of Thought is, in its essence, Atheistic; that whosoever will admit no organ of truth but logic, and nothing to exist but what can be argued of, must even content himself with this sad result, as the only solid one he can arrive at; and so with the best grace he can, 'of the æther make a gas, of God a force, of the second world a coffin;' of man an aimless nondescript, 'little better than a kind of vermin.' If Diderot, by bringing matters to this parting of the roads, have enabled or helped us to strike into the truer and better road, let him have our thanks for it. As to what remains, be pity our only feeling; was not his creed miserable enough; nay, moreover, did not he bear its miserableness so to speak, in our stead, so that it need now be no longer borne by any one?

In this same for him unavoidable circumstance, of the age he lived in, and the system of thought universal then, will be found the key to Diderot's whole spiritual character and procedure; the excuse for much in him that to us is false and perverted. Beyond the meagre 'rushlight of closet-logic,' Diderot recognised no guidance. That 'the Highest cannot be spoken of in words,' was a truth he had not dreamt of. Whatsoever thing he cannot debate of, we might almost say measure and weigh, and carry off with him to be eaten and enjoyed, is simply not there for him. He dwelt all his days

in the 'thin rind of the Conscious;' the deep fathomless domain of the Unconscious, whereon the other rests, and has its meaning, was not, under any shape, surmised by him. Thus must the Sanctuary of Man's Soul stand perennially shut against this man; where his hand ceased to grope, the World ended: within such strait conditions had he to live and labour. And naturally to distort and dislocate, more or less, all things he laboured on: for whosoever, in one way or another, recognises not that 'Divine Idea of the World, which lies at the bottom of Appearances,' can rightly interpret no Appearance; and whatsoever spiritual thing he does, must do it partially, do it falsely.

Mournful enough, accordingly, is the account which Diderot has given himself of Man's Existence; on the duties, relations, possessions whereof he had been a sedulous thinker. In every conclusion we have this fact of his Mechanical culture. Coupled too with another fact honourable to him: that he stuck not at half measures; but resolutely drove-on to the result, and held by it. So that we cannot call him a Sceptic; he has merited the more decisive name of Denier. He may be said to have denied that there was any the smallest Sacredness in Man, or in the Universe; and to have both speculated and lived on this singular footing. We behold in him the notable extreme of a man guiding himself with the least spiritual Belief that thinking man perhaps ever had. Religion, in all recognisable shapes and senses, he has done what man can do to clear-out of him. He believes that pleasure is pleasant; that a lie is unbelievable; and there his *credo* terminates; nay there, what perhaps makes his case almost unique, his very fancy seems to fall silent.

For a consequent man, all possible spiritual perversions are included under that grossest one of 'proselytising Atheism;' the rest, of what kind and degree soever, cannot any longer astonish us. Diderot has them of all kinds and degrees: indeed, we might say, the French Philosophe (take him at his *word*, for inwardly much that was foreign adhered to him, do what he could) has emitted a Scheme of the World, to which all that Oriental Mullah, Bonze or Talapoin have done

in that kind is poor and feeble. Omitting his whole unparalleled Cosmogonies and Physiologies; coming to his much milder Tables of the Moral Law, we shall glance here but at one minor external item, the relation between man and man; and at only one branch of this, and with all slightness, the relation of covenants; for example, the most important of these, Marriage.

Diderot has convinced himself, and indeed, as above became plain enough, acts on the conviction, that Marriage, contract it, solemnise it in what way you will, involves a solecism which reduces the amount of it to simple zero. It is a suicidal covenant; annuls itself in the very forming. 'Thou makest a vow,' says he, twice or thrice, as if the argument were a clincher, 'thou makest a vow of eternal constancy under a rock, which is even then crumbling away.' True, O Denis! the rock crumbles away: all things are changing; man changes faster than most of them. That, in the mean while, an Unchangeable lies under all this, and looks forth, solemn and benign, through the whole destiny and workings of man, is another truth; which no Mechanical Philosophe, in the dust of his logic-mill, can be expected to grind-out for himself. Man changes, and will change: the question then arises, Is it wise in him to tumble forth in headlong obedience to this love of change; is it so much as possible for him? Among the dualisms of man's wholly dualistic nature, this we might fancy was an observable one: that along with his unceasing tendency to change, there is a no less ineradicable tendency to persevere. Were man only here to change, let him, far from marrying, cease even to hedge-in fields, and plough them; before the autumn season, he may have lost the whim of reaping them. Let him return to the nomadic state, and set his house on wheels; nay there too a certain restraint must curb his love of change, or his cattle will perish by incessant driving, without grazing in the intervals. O Denis, what things thou babblest, in thy sleep! How, in this world of perpetual flux, shall man secure himself the smallest foundation, except hereby alone: that he take preassurance of his Fate; that in this and the other high act of

his life, his Will, with all solemnity, *abdicate* its right to change ; voluntarily, become involuntary, and say once for all, Be there then no farther dubitation on it! Nay, the poor unheroic craftsman; that very stocking-weaver, on whose loom thou now as amateur weavest : must not even he do as much,—when he signed his apprentice-indentures? The fool! who had such a relish in himself for all things, for kingship and emperorship ; yet made a vow (under a penalty of death by hunger) of eternal constancy to stocking-weaving. Yet otherwise, were no thriving craftsmen possible ; only botchers, bunglers, transitory nondescripts ; unfed, mostly gallows-feeding. But, on the whole, what feeling it was in the ancient devout deep soul, which of Marriage made *a Sacrament:* this, of all things in the world, is what Denis will think of for æons, without discovering. Unless, perhaps, it were to increase the vestry-fees?

Indeed, it must be granted, nothing yet seen or dreamt of can surpass the liberality of friend Denis as *magister morum ;* nay, often our poor Philosophe feels called on, in an age of such Spartan rigour, to step forth into the public Stews, and emit his inspiriting *Macte virtute!* there. Whither let the curious in such matters follow him : we, having work elsewhere, wish him 'good journey,'—or rather 'safe return.' Of Diderot's indelicacy and indecency there is for us but little to say. Diderot is not what we call indelicate and indecent; he is utterly unclean, scandalous, shameless, sansculottic-samoeidic. To declare with lyric fury that this is wrong ; or with historic calmness, that a pig of sensibility would go distracted did you accuse him of it, may, especially in countries where 'indecent exposure' is cognisable at police-offices, be considered superfluous. The only question is one in Natural History: Whence comes it? What may a man, not otherwise without elevation of mind, of kindly character, of immense professed philanthrophy, and doubtless of extraordinary insight, mean thereby? To us it is but another illustration of the fearless, all-for-logic, thoroughly consistent, Mechanical Thinker. It coheres well enough with Diderot's theory of man ; that there is nothing of sacred either in man or around man ; and that

chimeras are chimerical. How shall he for whom nothing, that cannot be jargoned of in debating-clubs, exists, have any faintest forecast of the depth, significance, divineness of SILENCE; of the sacredness of 'Secrets known to all?'

Nevertheless, Nature is great; and Denis was among her nobler productions. To a soul of his sort something like what we call Conscience could nowise be wanting: the feeling of Moral Relation; of the Infinite character thereof, as the essence and soul of all else that can be felt or known, must needs assert itself in him. Yet how assert itself? An Infinitude to one, in whose whole Synopsis of the Universe no Infinite stands marked? Wonderful enough is Diderot's method; and yet not wonderful, for we see it, and have always seen it, daily. Since there is nothing sacred in the Universe, whence this sacredness of what you call Virtue? Whence or how comes it that you, Denis Diderot, *must* not do a wrong thing; could not, without some qualm, speak, for example, one Lie, to gain Mahomet's Paradise with all its houris? There is no resource for it, but to get into that interminable ravelment of Reward and Approval, virtue being its own reward; and assert louder and louder,—contrary to the stern experience of all men, from the Divine Man, expiring with agony of bloody sweat on the accursed tree, down to us two, O reader (if we have ever done one Duty),—that Virtue is synonymous with Pleasure. Alas! was Paul an Apostle of the Gentiles, virtuous; and was virtue its own reward, when *his* approving conscience told him that he was 'the chief of sinners,' and if bounded to this life alone, 'of all men the most miserable?' Or has that same so sublime Virtue, at bottom, little to do with Pleasure, if with far other things? Are Eudoxia, and Eusebeia, and Euthanasia, and all the rest of them, of small account to Eubosia, and Eupepsia; and the pains of any moderately-paced Career of Vice, Denis himself being judge, as a drop in the bucket to the 'Career of Indigestions?' This is what Denis never in this world will grant.

But what then will he do? One of two things: admit, with Grimm, that there are 'two justices,'—which may be called by many handsome names, but properly are nothing but the

pleasant justice, and the unpleasant; whereof only the former is binding! Herein, however, Nature has been unkind to Denis; he is not a literary court-toadeater; but a free, genial, even poetic creature. There remains, therefore, nothing but the second expedient: to 'assert louder and louder;' in other words, to become a Philosophe Sentimentalist. Most wearisome, accordingly, is the perpetual clatter kept up here about *vertu, honnêteté, grandeur, sensibilité, âmes-nobles;* how unspeakably good it is to be virtuous, how pleasant, how sublime:—In the Devil and his grandmother's name, *be* virtuous; and let us have an end of it! In such sort (we will nevertheless joyfully recognise) does great Nature in spite of all contradictions declare her royalty, her divineness; and, for the poor Mechanical Philosophe, has prepared, since the substance is hidden from him, a shadow wherewith he can be cheered.

In fine, to our ill-starred Mechanical Philosophe-Sentimentalist, with his loud preaching and rather poor performing, shall we not, in various respects, 'thankfully stretch out the hand?' In all ways 'it was necessary that the logical side of things should likewise be made available.' On the whole, wondrous higher developments of much, of Morality among the rest, are visible in the course of the world's doings, at this day. A plausible prediction were that the Ascetic System is not to regain its exclusive dominancy. Ever, indeed, must Self-denial, '*Annihilation of Self*,' be the beginning of all moral action: meanwhile, he that looks well, may discern filaments of a nobler System, wherein this lies included as one harmonious element. Who knows, for example, what new unfoldings and complex adjustments await us, before the true relation of moral Greatness to moral Correctness, and their proportional value, can be established? How, again, is perfect tolerance for the Wrong to co-exist with ever-present conviction that Right stands related to it, as a God does to a Devil,—an Infinite to an opposite Infinite? How, in a word, through what tumultuous vicissitudes, after how many false partial efforts, deepening the confusion, shall it at length be made manifest, and kept continually manifest, to the hearts of men, that the Good is not properly the highest, but the Beauti-

ful; that the true Beautiful (differing from the false, as Heaven does from Vauxhall) comprehends in it the Good?—In some future century, it may be found that Denis Diderot, acting and professing, in wholeness and with full conviction, what the immense multitude act in halfness and without conviction, has, though by strange inverse methods, forwarded the result. It was long ago written, the Omnipotent, 'maketh the wrath of the wicked,' the folly of the foolish, 'to praise Him.' In any case, Diderot acted it, and not we, Diderot bears it, and not we: peace be with Diderot!

The other branch of his renown is excellence as a Talker. Or, in wider view, think his admirers, his philosophy was not more surpassing than his delivery thereof. What his philosophy amounts to, we have been examining: but now, that in this other conversational province he was eminent, is easily believed. A frank, ever-hoping, social character; a mind full of knowledge, full of fervour; of great compass, of great depth, ever on the alert: such a man could not have other than a 'mouth of gold.' It is still plain, whatsoever thing imaged itself before him was imaged in the most lucid clearness; it was rendered back, with light labour, in corresponding clearness. Whether, at the same time, Diderot's conversation, relatively so superior, deserved the intrinsic character of supreme, may admit of question. The worth of words spoken depends, after all, on the wisdom that resides in them; and in Diderot's words there was often too little of this. Vivacity, far-darting brilliancy, keenness of theoretic vision, paradoxical ingenuity, gaiety, even touches of humour; all this must have been here: whosoever had preferred sincerity, earnestness, depth of practical rather that theoretic insight, with not less of impetuosity, of clearness and sureness, with humour, emphasis, or such other melody or rhythm as that utterance demanded,—must have come over to London; and, with forbearant submissiveness, listened to our Johnson. Had we the stronger man, then? Be it rather, as in that duel of Cœur-de-Lion with the light, nimble, yet also invincible Saladin, that each nation had the strength which most befitted it.

Closely connected with this power of conversation is Diderot's facility of composition. A talent much celebrated; numerous really surprising proofs whereof are on record: how he wrote long works within the week; sometimes within almost the four-and-twenty hours. Unhappily, enough still remains to make such feats credible. Most of Diderot's Works bear the clearest traces of extemporaneousness; *stans pede in uno!* They are much liker printed talk, than the concentrated well-considered utterance which, from a man of that weight, we expect to see set in types. It is said, 'he wrote good pages, but could not write a good book.' Substitute *did not* for *could not;* and there is truth in the saying. Clearness, as has been observed, comprehensibility at a glance, is the character of whatever Diderot wrote: a clearness which, in visual objects, rises into the region of the Artistic, and resembles that of Richardson or Defoe. Yet, grant that he makes his meaning clear, what is the nature of that meaning itself? Alas, for most part, only a hasty, flimsy, superficial meaning, with gleams of a deeper vision peering through. More or less of disorder reigns in all Works that Diderot wrote; not order, but the plausible appearance of such: the true heart of the matter is not found; 'he skips deftly along the radii, and skips over the centre, and misses it.'

Thus may Diderot's admired Universality and admired Facility have both turned to disadvantage for him. We speak not of his reception by the world: this indeed is the 'age of specialties;' yet, owing to other causes, Diderot the Encyclopedist had success enough. But, what is of far more importance, his inward growth was marred: the strong tree shot not up in any one noble stem, bearing boughs, and fruit, and shade all round; but spread out horizontally, after a very moderate height, into innumerable branches, not useless, yet of quite secondary use. Diderot could have been an Artist; and he was little better than an Encyclopedic Artisan. No smatterer, indeed; a faithful artisan; of really universal equipment, in his sort: he did the work of many men; yet nothing, or little, which many could not have done.

Accordingly, his Literary Works, now lying finished some fifty years, have already, to the most surprising degree, shrunk in importance. Perhaps no man so much talked of is so little known; to the great majority he is no longer a Reality, but a Hearsay. Such, indeed, partly is the natural fate of Works Polemical, which almost all Diderot's are. The Polemic annihilates his opponent; but in so doing annihilates himself too, and both are swept away to make room for something other and farther. Add to this, the slight-textured transitory character of Diderot's style; and the fact is well enough explained. Meanwhile, let him to whom it applies consider it; him among whose gifts it was to rise into the Perennial, and who dwelt rather low down in the Ephemeral, and ephemerally fought and scrambled there! Diderot the great has contracted into Diderot the easily-measurable: so must it be with others of the like.

In how many sentences can the net-product of all that tumultuous Atheism, printed over many volumes, be comprised! Nay, the whole *Encyclopédie*, that world's wonder of the eighteenth century, the Belus' Tower of an age of refined Illumination, what has it become? Alas, no stone-tower, that will stand there as our strength and defence through all times; but, at best, a wooden *Helepolis* (City-taker), wherein stationed, the Philosophus Policaster has burnt and battered-down many an old ruinous Sorbonne; and which now, when that work is pretty well over, may, in turn, be taken asunder, and used as firewood. The famed Encyclopedical Tree itself has proved an artificial one, and borne no fruit. We mean that, in its nature, it is mechanical only; one of those attempts to parcel-out the invisible mystical Soul of Man with its *infinitude* of phases and character, into shop-lists of what are called 'faculties,' 'motives,' and such like; which attempts may indeed be made with all degrees of insight, from that of a Doctor Spurzheim to that of Denis Diderot or Jeremy Bentham; and prove useful for a day, but for a day only.

Nevertheless it were false to regard Diderot as a Mechanist and nothing more; as one working and grinding blindly in the mill of mechanical Logic, joyful with his lot there, and

unconscious of any other. Call him one rather who contributed to deliver us therefrom: both by his manful whole spirit as a Mechanist, which drove all things to their ultimatum and crisis; and even by a dim-struggling faculty, which virtually aimed beyond this. Diderot, we said, was gifted by Nature for an Artist: strangely flashing through his mechanical encumbrances, are rays of thought, which belong to the Poet, to the Prophet; which, in other environment, could have revealed the deepest to us. Not to seek far, consider this one little sentence, which he makes the last of the dying Sanderson: '*Le temps, la matière et l'espace ne sont peut-être qu'un point* (Time, Matter and Space are perhaps but a *point*)!'

So too, in Art, both as a speaker and a doer, he is to be reckoned as one of those who pressed forward irresistibly out of the artificial barren sphere of that time, into a truer genial one. His Dramas, the *Fils Naturel*, the *Père de Famille*, have indeed ceased to live; yet is the attempt towards great things visible in them; the attempt remains to us, and seeks otherwise, and has found, and is finding, fulfilment. Not less in his *Salons* (Judgments of Art-Exhibitions), written hastily for Grimm, and by ill chance on artists of quite secondary character, do we find the freest recognition of whatever excellence there is; nay an impetuous endeavour, not critically, but even creatively, towards something more excellent. Indeed, what with their unrivalled clearness, painting the picture over again for us, so that we too *see* it, and can judge it; what with their sunny fervour, inventiveness, real artistic genius, which wants nothing but a *hand*, they are, with some few exceptions in the German tongue, the only Pictorial Criticisms we know of worth reading. Here too, as by his own practice in the Dramatic branch of art, Diderot stands forth as the main originator, almost the sole one in his own country, of that many-sided struggle towards what is called Nature, and copying of Nature, and faithfulness to Nature; a deep indispensable truth, subversive of the old error; yet under that figure, only a half-truth, for Art too is Art, as surely as Nature is Nature; which struggle, meanwhile, either as half-truth or working itself into a whole truth, may be seen, in countries that

have any Art, still forming the tendency of all artistic endeavour. In which sense, Diderot's *Essay on Painting* has been judged worth translation by the greatest modern Judge of Art, and greatest modern Artist, in the highest kind of Art; and may be read anew with argumentative commentary and exposition, in *Goethe's Works*.

Nay, let us grant, with pleasure, that for Diderot himself the realms of Art were not wholly unvisited; that he, too, so heavily imprisoned, stole Promethean fire. Among these multitudinous, most miscellaneous Writings of his, in great part a manufactured farrago of Philosophism no longer saleable, and now looking melancholy enough,—are two that we can almost call Poems; that have something perennially poetic in them: *Jacques; le Fataliste* in a still higher degree, the *Neveu de Rameau*. The occasional *blueness* of both; even that darkest indigo in some parts of the former, shall not altogether affright us. As it were, a loose, straggling sunbeam flies here over Man's Existence in France, now nigh a century behind us: 'from the height of luxurious elegance to the depths of shamelessness,' all is here. Slack, careless seems the combination of the picture; wriggling, disjointed, like a bundle of flails; yet strangely united in the painter's unconscious feeling. Wearisomely crackling wit gets silent; a grim, taciturn, dare-devil, almost Hogarthian humour, rises in the background. Like this there is nothing that we know of in the whole range of French literature: La Fontaine is shallow in comparison; the La Bruyère wit-species not to be named. It resembles *Don Quixote*, rather; of somewhat similar stature; yet of complexion altogether different; through the one looks a sunny Elysium, through the other a sulphurous Erebus: both hold of the Infinite. This *Jacques*, perhaps, was not quite so hastily put together: yet there too haste is manifest; the Author finishes it off, not by working-out the figures and movements, but by dashing his brush against the canvas; a manœuvre which in this case has not succeeded. The *Rameau's Nephew*, which is the shorter, is also the better; may pass for decidedly the best of all Diderot's compositions. It looks like a Sibylline utterance from a

heart all in fusion ; no ephemeral thing (for it was written as a Satire on Palissot) was ever more perennially treated. Strangely enough too, it lay some fifty years in German and Russian Libraries ; came out first in the masterly version of Goethe, in 1805 : and only (after a deceptive *re*-translation by M. Saur, a courageous mystifier otherwise) reached the Paris public in 1821,—when perhaps *all*, for whom and against whom it was written were no more !—It is a farce-tragedy ; and its fate has corresponded to its purport. One day it must also be translated into English ; but will require to be done by *head ;* the common steam-machinery will not properly suffice for it.

We here (*con la bocca dolce*) take leave of Diderot in his intellectual aspect, as Artist and Thinker : a richly endowed, unfavourably situated nature ; whose effort, much marred, yet not without fidelity of aim, can triumph, on rare occasions ; is perhaps nowhere utterly fruitless. In the Moral aspect, as Man, he makes a somewhat similar figure ; as indeed, in all men, in him especially, the Opinion and the Practice stand closely united ; and as a wise man has remarked, 'the speculative principles are often but a supplement (or excuse) to the practical manner of life.' In conduct, Diderot can nowise seem admirable to us ; yet neither inexcusable ; on the whole, not at all quite worthless. Lavater traced in his physiognomy 'something timorous ;' which reading his friends admitted to be a correct one. Diderot, in truth, is no hero : the earnest soul, wayfaring and warfaring in the complexities of a World like to overwhelm him, yet wherein he by Heaven's grace will keep faithfully warfaring, prevailing or not, can derive small solacement from this light, fluctuating, not to say flimsy existence of Diderot : no Gospel in that kind has he left us. The man, in fact, with all his high gifts, had rather a female character. Susceptible, sensitive, living by impulses, which at best he had *fashioned* into some show of principles ; with vehemence enough, with even a female uncontrollableness ; with little of manful steadfastness, considerateness, invincibility. Thus, too, we find him living mostly in the society

of women, or of men who, like women, flattered him, and made life easy for him; recoiling with horror from an earnest Jean Jacques, who understood not the science of walking in a vain show; but imagined, poor man, that truth was there as a thing to be told, as a thing to be acted.

We call Diderot, then, not a coward; yet not in any sense a brave man. Neither towards himself, nor towards others, was he brave. All the virtues, says M. de Meister, which require not 'a great *suite* (sequency) of ideas' were his: all that do require such a *suite* were not his. In other words, what duties were easy for him he did: happily Nature had rendered several easy. His spiritual aim, moreover, seemed not so much to be enforcement, exposition of Duty, as discovery of a Duty-made-easy. Natural enough that he should strike into that province of *sentiment, cœur-noble* and so forth. Alas, to declare that the beauty of virtue is beautiful, costs comparatively little: to win it, and bear it, is quite another enterprise,—wherein the loud braggart, we know, is not the likeliest to succeed. On the whole, peace be with *sentiment*, for that also lies behind us!—For the rest, as hinted, what duties were difficult, our Diderot left undone. How should he, the *cœur sensible*, front such a monster as Pain? And now, since misgivings cannot fail in that course, what is to be done but fill-up all asperities with floods of *sensibilité*, and so voyage more or less smoothly along. *Est-il bon? Est-il méchant?* is his own account of himself. At all events, he was no voluntary hypocrite; that great praise can be given him. And thus with Mechanical Philosophism, and *passion vive;* working, flirting; 'with more of softness than of true affection, sometimes with the malice and rage of a child, but on the whole an inexhaustible fund of good-natured simplicity,' has he come down to us, for better or worse: and what can we do but receive him?—

If now we and our reader, reinterpreting for our present want that Life and Performance of Diderot, have brought it clearer before us, be the hour spent thereon, were it even more wearisome, no profitless one! Have we not striven to unite our own brief present moment more and more com-

pactly with the Past and with the Future; have we not done what lay at our hand towards reducing that same Memoirism of the Eighteenth Century into History, and 'weaving' a thread or two thereof nearer to the condition of a web?

But finally, if we rise with this matter, as we should try to do with all matters, into the proper region of Universal History, and look on it with the eye not of this time or of that time, but of Time at large, perhaps the prediction might stand here, That intrinsically, essentially little lies in it; that one day when the net-result of our European way of life comes to be summed up, this whole as yet so boundless concern of French Philosophism will dwindle into the thinnest of fractions, or vanish into nonentity! Alas, while the rude History and Thoughts of those same '*Juifs misérables*,' the barbaric War-song of a Deborah and Barak, the rapt prophetic Utterance of an unkempt Isaiah, last now, with deepest significance, say only these three thousand years,—what has the thrice-resplendent *Encyclopédie* shrivelled into within these threescore! This is a fact which, explain it, express it, in what way he will, your Encyclopedist should actually consider. *Those* were tones caught from the sacred Melody of the All, and have harmony and meaning forever; *these* of his are but outer discords, and their jangling dies away without result. 'The special, sole and deepest theme of the World's and Man's History,' says the Thinker of our time, 'whereto all other themes are subordinated, remains the Conflict of Unbelief and Belief. All epochs wherein Belief prevails, under what form it may, are splendid, heart-elevating, fruitful for contemporaries and posterity. All epochs, on the contrary, wherein Unbelief under what form soever, maintains its sorry victory, should they even for a moment glitter with a sham splendour, vanish from the eyes of posterity; because no one chooses to burden himself with study of the unfruitful.'

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

ESSAYS

COLLECTED AND REPUBLISHED

BY

THOMAS CARLYLE

PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.—SIR WALTER SCOTT.—VARNHAGEN VON ENSE'S MEMOIRS.—PETITION ON THE COPYRIGHT BILL.—ON THE SINKING OF THE VENGEUR.—BAILLIE THE COVENANTER.

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PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

THE French Revolution, the grand event of these modern ages. (p. 5).—Innumerable Histories, and attempts to picture it. Thiers's *History* with its superficial air of order and candour, inwardly waste, inorganic, incorrect. Mignet's, although utterly prosaic, a much more honestly-written book: His jingling dance of algebraical x s, and Kalmuck rotary-calabash. Only some three publications, hitherto, really worth reading on the matter. (6).—The *Histoire Parlementaire*, a valuable and faithful collection of facts and documents. Account of old Foulon's miserable end. Camille Desmoulins, a light harmless creature, 'born to write verses;' but whom Destiny directed to overthrow Bastilles. The French Palais Royal, and the Roman Forum; White and black cockades: Insurrection of Women. (11).—The Jacobins' Club, in its early days of rose pink and moral-sublime: In some few months—The September Massacre: Like some Ezekiel Vision become real, does Scene after Scene disclose itself. The French Revolution, 'an attempt to realise Christianity,' and put it fairly into action in our world: For the love of Heaven, Messieurs, '*humez vos formules*,' and look! (19).

PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.[1]

[1837.]

It appears to be, if not stated in words, yet tacitly felt and understood everywhere, that the event of these modern ages is the French Revolution. A huge explosion, bursting through all formulas and customs; confounding into wreck and chaos the ordered arrangements of earthly life; blotting-out, one may say, the very firmament and skyey loadstars,—though only for a season. Once in the fifteen-hundred years such a thing was ordained to come. To those who stood present in the actual midst of that smoke and thunder, the effect might well be too violent: blinding and deafening, into confused exasperation, almost into madness. These onlookers have played their part, were it with the printing-press or with the battle-cannon, and are departed; their work, such as it was, remaining behind them;—where the

[1] London and Westminster Review, No. 9.—*Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française; ou Journal des Assemblées Nationales depuis* 1789 *jusqu'en* 1815: *contenant la Narration des Evénemens, les Débats, &c. &c.* (Parliamentary History of the French Revolution; or Journal of the National Assemblies from 1789 to 1815: containing a Narrative of the Occurrences; Debates of the Assemblies; Discussions in the chief Popular Societies, especially in that of the Jacobins; Records of the Commune of Paris; Sessions of the Revolutionary Tribunal; Reports of the leading Political Trials; Detail of the Annual Budgets; Picture of the Moral Movement, extracted from the Newspapers, Pamphlets, &c. of each Period: preceded by an Introduction on the History of France till the Convocation of the States-General.) By P. J. B. Buchez and P. C. Roux. Tomes 1er–23me et seq. Paris, 1833–1836.

French Revolution also remains. And now, for us who have receded to the distance of some half-century, the explosion becomes a thing visible, surveyable: we see its flame and sulphur-smoke blend with the clear air (far *under* the stars); and hear its uproar as part of the sick noise of life,—loud, indeed, yet embosomed too, as all noise is, in the infinite of silence. It as an evènt which can be looked on; which may still be execrated, still be celebrated and psalmodied; but which it were better now to begin understanding. Really there are innumerable reasons why we ought to know this same French Revolution as it was: of which reasons (apart altogether from that of 'Philosophy teaching by Experience,' and so forth), is there not the best summary in this one reason, that we so *wish* to know it? Considering the qualities of the matter, one may perhaps reasonably feel that since the time of the Crusades, or earlier, there is no chapter of history so well worth studying.

Stated or not, we say, this persuasion is tacitly admitted, and acted upon. In these days everywhere you find it one of the most pressing duties for the writing guild, to produce history on history of the French Revolution. In France it would almost seem as if the young author felt that he must make this his proof-shot, and evidence of craftsmanship: accordingly they do fire-off *Histoires, Précis of Histoires, Annales, Fastes* (to say nothing of Historical Novels, *Gil Blases, Dantons, Barnaves, Grangeneuves*), in rapid succession, with or without effect. At all events it is curious to look upon; curious to contrast the picturing of the same fact by the men of this generation and position with the picturing of it by the men of the last. From Barruel and Fantin Desodoards to Thiers and Mignet there is a distance! Each individual takes up the Phenomenon according to his own point of vision, to the structure of his optic organs;—gives, consciously, some poor crotchety picture of several things; unconsciously some picture of himself at least. And the Phenomenon, for its part, subsists there, all the while, unaltered; waiting to be pictured as often as you like, its entire meaning not to be compressed into any picture drawn by man.

Thiers's *History*, in ten volumes foolscap-octavo, contains, if we remember rightly, one reference; and that to a book, not to the page or chapter of a book. It has, for these last seven or eight years, a wide or even high reputation; which latter it is as far as possible from meriting. A superficial air of order, of clearness, calm candour, is spread over the work; but inwardly, it is waste, inorganic; no human head that honestly tries can conceive the French Revolution *so*. A critic of our acquaintance undertook, by way of bet, to find four errors per hour in Thiers: he won amply on the first trial or two.[1] And yet readers (we must add) taking all this along with them, may peruse Thiers with comfort in certain circumstances, nay even with profit; for he is a brisk man of his sort; and does tell you much, if you knew nothing.

Mignet's, again, is a much more honestly written book; yet also an eminently unsatisfactory one. His two volumes contain far more meditation and investigation in them than Thiers's ten: their degree of preferability therefore is very high; for it may be said: Call a book diffuse, and you call it in all senses bad; the writer could not find the right word to say, and so said many more or less wrong ones; did not hit the nail on the head, only smote and bungled about it and about it. Mignet's book has a compactness, a rigour, as of riveted rods of iron: this also is an image of what symmetry it has;—symmetry, if not of a living earth-born Tree, yet of a firm well-manufactured Gridiron. Without life, without colour or verdure: that is to say, Mignet is heartily and altogether a *prosaist;* you are too happy that he is not a *quack* as well! It is very mortifying, also, to study his philosophical reflections; how he jingles and rumbles a quantity of mere abstractions and dead logical formulas, and calls it

[1] Thiers says, 'Notables consented with eagerness' (vol. i. p. 10), whereas they properly did not consent at all; 'Parlement recalled on the 10th of September' (for the 15th); and then 'Séance Royale took place on the 20th of the same month' (19th of quite a different month, not the same, nor next to the same); 'D'Espremenil a young Counsellor' (of forty and odd); 'Duport a young man' (turned of sixty), &c. &c.

Thinking ;—rumbles and rumbles, till he judges there may be enough ; then begins again narrating. As thus :

'The Constitution of 1791 was made on such principles as had resulted from the ideas and the situation of France. It was the work of the middle class, which chanced to be the strongest then : for, as is well known, whatever force has the lead will fashion the institutions according to its own aims. Now this force, when it belongs to one, is despotism ; when to several, it is privilege ; when to all, it is right : which latter state is the ultimatum of society, as it was its beginning. France had finally arrived thither, after passing through feudalism, which is the aristocratic institution ; and then through absolutism, which is the monarchic one.

'The work of the Constituent Assembly perished, not so much by its own defects as by the assaults of factions. Standing between the aristocracy and the multitude, it was attacked by the former, and stormed and won by the latter. The multitude would never have become supreme, had not civil war and the coalition of foreign states rendered its intervention and help indispensable. To defend the country the multitude required to have the governing of it : thereupon (*alors*) it made *its* revolution, as the middle class had made its. The multitude too had its *Fourteenth of July*, which was the *Tenth of August ;* its Constituent, which was the Convention ; its Government, which was the Committee of *Salut Public ;* but, as we shall see,' &c.[1]

Or thus ; for there is the like at the end of every chapter :

'But royalty had virtually fallen, on the Tenth of August ; that day was the insurrection of the multitude against the middle class and constitutional throne, as the Fourteenth of July had been the insurrection of the middle classes against the privileged classes and an absolute throne. The Tenth of August witnessed the commencement of the dictatorial and arbitrary epoch of the Revolution. Circumstances becoming more and more difficult, there arose a vast war, which required increased energy ; and this energy, unregulated, inasmuch as it was popular, rendered the sway of the lower class an unquiet, oppressive and cruel sway.' 'It was not any way possible that the *Bourgeoisie* (middle class), which had been

[1] Chap. iv. vol. i. p. 271.

strong enough to strike-down the old government and the privileged classes, but which had taken to repose after this victory, could repulse the Emigration and united Europe. There was needed for that a new shock, a new faith; there was needed for that a new Class, numerous, ardent, not yet fatigued and which loved its Tenth of August, as the Burgherhood loved its Fourteenth of,' &c. &c.[1]

So uncommonly *lively* are these Abstractions (at bottom only occurrences, similitudes, days of the month, and such like), which rumble here in the historical head! Abstractions really of the most lively, insurrectionary character; nay, which produce offspring, and indeed are oftenest parricidally devoured thereby:—such is the jingling and rumbling which calls itself Thinking. Nearly so, though with greater effect, might algebraical *x*'s go rumbling in some Pascal's or Babbage's mill. Just so, indeed, do the Kalmuck people pray: quantities of written prayers are put in some rotary pipkin or calabash (hung on a tree, or going like the small barrel-churn of agricultural districts); this the devotee has only to whirl and churn; so long as he whirls, it is prayer; when he ceases whirling, the prayer is done. Alas! this is a sore error, very generally, among French thinkers of the present time. One ought to add, that Mignet takes his place at the head of that brotherhood of his; that his little book, though abounding too in errors of detail, better deserves what place it has than any other of recent date.

The older Desodoardses, Barruels, Lacretelles, and such like, exist, but will hardly profit much. Toulongeon, a man of talent and integrity, is very vague; often incorrect for an eye-witness; his military details used to be reckoned valuable; but, we suppose, Jomini has eclipsed them now. The Abbé Montgaillard has shrewdness, decision, insight; abounds in anecdotes, strange facts and reports of facts: his book being written in the form of Annals, is convenient for consulting. For the rest, he is acrid, exaggerated, occasionally altogether perverse; and, with his hastes and his hatreds, falls into the strangest hallucination,—as, for example, when he coolly re-

[1] Chap. v. vol. i. p. 371.

cords that 'Madame de Staël, Necker's daughter, was seen (*on vit*) distributing brandy to the *Gardes Françaises* in their barracks;' that 'D'Orleans Egalité had a pair of *man*-skin breeches,'—leather breeches, of human skin, such as they did prepare in the tannery of Meudon, but *too late* for D'Orleans! The history by *Deux Amis de Liberté*, if the reader secure the original edition, is perhaps worth all the others; and offers (at least till 1792, after which it becomes convulsive, semi-fatuous, here and there, in the remaining dozen volumes) the best, correctest, most picturesque narrative yet published. It is very correct, very picturesque; wants only *fore-shortening*, shadow and compression; a work of decided merit; the authors of it, what is singular, appear not to be known.

Finally, our English histories do likewise abound: copious if not in facts, yet in reflections on facts. They will prove to the most incredulous that this French Revolution was, as Chamfort said, no 'rose-water Revolution;' that the universal insurrectionary abrogation of law and custom was managed in a most unlawful, uncustomary manner. He who wishes to know how a solid *Custos rotulorum*, speculating over his port after dinner, interprets the phenomena of contemporary Universal History, may look in these books: he who does not wish that, need not look.

On the whole, after all these writings and printings, the weight of which would sink an Indiaman, there are, perhaps, only some three publications hitherto that can be considered as forwarding essentially a right knowledge of this matter. The *first* of these is the *Analyse du Moniteur*, complete expository Index, and Syllabus of the Moniteur Newspaper from 1789 to 1799; a work carrying its significance in its title;—provided it be faithfully executed; which it is well known to be. Along with this we may mention the series of Portraits, a hundred in number, published with the original edition of it: many of them understood to be accurate likenesses. The natural face of a man is often worth more than several biographies of him, as biographies are written. These hundred Portraits have been copied into a book called *Scènes de la Révolution*, which contains other pictures, of small value, and

some not useless writing by Chamfort; and are often to be found in libraries. A republication of Vernet's Caricatures[1] would be a most acceptable service, but has not been thought of hitherto. The *second* work to be counted here is the *Choix des Rapports, Opinions et Discours* in some twenty volumes, with an excellent index: parliamentary speeches, reports, &c. are furnished in abundance; complete illustration of all that this Senatorial province (rather a wearisome one) can illustrate. *Thirdly*, we have to name the Collection of *Memoirs*, completed several years ago, in above a hundred volumes. Booksellers Baudouin, Editors Berville and Barrière, have done their utmost; adding notes, explanations, rectifications, with portraits also if you like: *Louvet*, *Riouffe* and the two volumes of *Memoirs on the Prisons* are the most attractive pieces. This Baudouin Collection, therefore, joins itself to that of Petitot, as a natural sequel.

And now a *fourth* work, which follows in the train of these, and deserves to be reckoned along with them, is this *Histoire Parlementaire* of Messieurs Buchez and Roux. The Authors are men of ability and repute; Buchez, if we mistake not, is Dr. Buchez, and practises medicine with acceptance; Roux is known as an essayist and journalist: they once listened a little to Saint-Simon, but it was before Saint-Simonism called called itself 'a religion,' and vanished in Bedlam. We have understood there is a certain bibliomaniac military gentleman in Paris, who in the course of years has amassed the most astonishing collection of revolutionary ware: books, pamphlets, newspapers, even sheets and handbills, ephemeral printings and paintings, such as the day brought them forth, lie there without end.[2] Into this warehouse, as indeed into all man-

[1] See *Mercier's Nouveau Paris*, vol. iv. p. 254.

[2] It is generally known that a similar collection, perhaps still larger and more curious, lies buried in the British Museum here,—inaccessible for want of a proper catalogue. Some eighteen months ago, the respectable sub-librarian seemed to be working at such a thing: by respectful application to him, you could gain access to his room, and have the satisfaction of mounting on ladders, and reading the outside titles of his books, which was a great help. Otherwise you could not in many weeks

ner of other repositories, Messrs. Buchez and Roux have happily found access: the *Histoire Parlementaire* is the fruit of their labours there. A Number, two forming a Volume, is published every fortnight: we have the first Twenty-two Volumes before us, which bring down the narrative to January 1793; there must be several other Volumes out, which we have not yet seen. Conceive a judicious compilation with such resources. Parliamentary Debates, in summary, or (where the occasion warrants it) given at large; this is by no means the most interesting part of the matter: we have excerpts, notices, hints of all imaginable sorts; of Newspapers, of Pamphlets, of Sectionary and Municipal Records, of the Jacobins' Club, of Placard-journals, nay of Placards and Caricatures. No livelier emblem of the time, in its actual movement and tumult, could be presented. The Editors connect these fragments by expositions such as are needful; so that a reader coming unprepared to the work can still know what he is about. Their expositions, as we can testify, are handsomely done: but altogether apart from these, the excerpts themselves are the valuable thing. The scissors, in such a case, are independent of the pen. One of the most interesting English biographies we have is that long thin Folio on Oliver Cromwell, published some five-and-twenty years ago, where the editor has merely clipt-out from the contemporary newspapers whatsoever article, paragraph, or sentence he found to contain the name of Old Noll, and printed them in the order of their dates. It is surprising that the like has not been attempted in other cases. Had seven of the eight Translators of Faust, and seventy-times-seven of the four-hundred-fourscore-and-ten Imaginative Authors, but thrown-down the writing-instrument, and turned to the old newspaper-files judiciously with the cutting one!

We can testify, after not a little examination, that the Editors of the *Histoire Parlementaire* are men of fidelity, of diligence; that their accuracy in regard to facts, dates and so forth, is far beyond the average. Of course they have their

ascertain so much as the table of contents of this repository; and, after days of weary waiting, dusty rummaging, and sickness of hope deferred, gave-up the enterprise as a 'game not worth the candle.'

own opinions, prepossessions even ; but these are honest prepossessions, which they do not hide ; which one can estimate the force of, allow for the result of. Wilful falsification, did the possibility of it lie in their character, is otherwise out of the question. But, indeed, our Editors are men of earnestness, of strict principle ; of a faith, were it only in the republican Tricolor. Their democratic faith, truly, is palpable, thorough-going ; as it has a right to be, in these days, since it likes. The thing you have to praise, however, is that it is a quiet faith, never an hysterical one ; never expresses itself otherwise than with a becoming calmness, especially with a becoming brevity. The hoarse deep croak of Marat, the brilliant sharp-cutting gaiety of Desmoulins, the dull bluster of Prudhomme, the cackling garrulity of Brissot, all is welcomed with a cold gravity and brevity ; all is illustrative, if not of one thing, then of another. Nor are the royalist Royous, Suleaus, Peltiers forgotten : *Acts of the Apostles*, *King's Friend*, nor *Crowing of the Cock :* these, indeed, are more sparingly administered ; but at the right time, as is promised, we shall have more. In a word, it may be said of this *Histoire Parlementaire*, that the wide promise held-out in its title-page is really in some respectable measure fulfilled. With a fit Index to wind it up (which Index ought to be not good only but excellent, so much depends on it here), this Work bids fair to be one of the most important yet published on the History of the Revolution. No library, that professes to have a collection in this sort, can dispense with it.

A *Histoire Parlementaire* is precisely the house, or say rather, the unbuilt city, of which the single brick *can* form a specimen. In so rich a variety, the only difficulty is where to choose. We have scenes of tragedy, of comedy, of farce, of farce-tragedy oftenest of all ; there is eloquence, gravity ; there is bluster, bombast and absurdity : scenes tender, scenes barbarous, spirit-stirring, and then flatly wearisome : a thing waste, incoherent, wild to look upon ; but great with the greatness of reality ; for the thing exhibited is no vision, but a fact. Let us, as the first excerpt, give this tragedy of old Foulon, which all the world has heard of, perhaps not very

accurately. Foulon's life-drama, with its hasty cruel sayings and mean doings, with its thousandfold intrigues, and 'the people eating grass if they like,' ends in this miserable manner. It is the Editors themselves who speak; compiling from various sources:

'Towards five in the morning (Paris, 22d July 1789), M. Foulon was brought in; he had been arrested at Vitry, near Fontainebleau, by the peasants of the place. Doubtless this man thought himself very guilty towards the people' (say, very hateful); 'for he had spread-abroad a report of his death; and had even buried one of his servants, who happened to die then, under his own name. He had afterwards hidden himself in an estate of M. de Sartines'; where he was detected and seized.

'M. Foulon was taken to the Hôtel-de-Ville, where they made him wait. Towards nine o'clock, the assembled Committee had decided that he should be sent to the Abbaye prison. M. de Lafayette was sent for, that he might execute this order; he was abroad over the Districts: he could not be found. During this time a crowd collected in the square; and required to see Foulon. It was noon: M. Bailly came down; the people listened to him; but still persisted. In the end they penetrated into the great hall of the Hôtel-de-Ville; would see Foulon, "whom," say they, "you are wanting to smuggle off from justice." Foulon was presented to them. Then began this remarkable dialogue. M. de la Poize, an Elector: "Messieurs every guilty person should be judged." "Yes, judged directly, and then hanged."—M. Osselin: "To judge, one must have judges; let us send M. Foulon to the tribunals." "No, no," replied the people, "judge him just now."—"Since you will not have the common judges," said M. Osselin, "it is indispensable to appoint others." "Well, judge him yourselves."—"We have no right either to judge or to create judges; do you name them." "Well," cried the people. "M. le Curé of Saint-Etienne then, and M. le Curé of Saint-André."—Osselin: "Two judges are not enough, there needs seven." Thereupon the people named Messrs. Quatremere, Verangue, &c. "Here are seven judges indeed," said Osselin; "but we still want a clerk." "Be you clerk."—"A king's Attorney." "Let it be M. Duveyrier."—"Of what crime is M. Foulon accused?" asked Duveyrier. "He wished to harass the people; he said he would make them eat grass; he was in the plot;

he was for national bankruptcy; he bought-up corn." The two curates then rose, and declared that they refused to judge; the laws of the church not permitting them. "They are right," said some. "They are cozening us," said others; "and the prisoner all the while is making his escape." At these words there rose a frightful tumult in the Hall. "Messieurs," said an Elector, "name four of yourselves to guard him." Four men accordingly were chosen; sent into the neighbouring apartment, where Foulon was. "But will you judge, then?" cried the crowd. "Messieurs, you see there are two judges wanting."—"We name M. Bailly and M. Lafayette." "But M. Lafayette is absent; one must either wait for him, or name some other."—"Well, then, name directly, and do it yourself."

'At length the Electors agreed to proceed to judgment; Foulon was again brought in. The foremost part of the crowd joined hands, and formed a chain several ranks deep. in the middle of which he was received. At this moment M. Lafayette came in; went and took his place at the board among the Electors; and then addressed to the people a discourse, of which the *Ami du Roi* and the Records of the Town-hall, the two authorities we borrow from here, give different reports.'

Lafayette's speech, according to both versions, is to the effect that Foulon is guilty; but that he doubtless has accomplices; that he must be taken to the Abbaye prison, and investigated there. "Yes, yes, to prison! Off with him, off!" cried the crowd. The *Deux Amis* add another not insignificant circumstance, that poor Foulon himself, hearing this conclusion of Lafayette's, clapped hands; whereupon the crowd said, "See! they are both in a story!" Our Editors continue and conclude:

'At this moment there rose a great clamour in the square. "It is the Palais Royal coming," said one. "It is the Faubourg Saint-Antoine," said another. Then a well-dressed person (*homme bien mis*) advanced towards the board, and said, "*Vous vous moquez!* What is the use of judging a man who has been judged these thirty years?" At this word, Foulon was clutched; hurled out to the square; and finally tied to the fatal rope, which hung from the *Lanterne* at the corner of the Rue de la Vannerie. The rope was afterwards

cut; the head was put on a pike, and paraded,'—with 'grass' in the mouth of it, they might have added![1]

The *Revolutions de France et de Brabant*, Camille Desmoulin's Newspaper, furnishes numerous extracts, in the earlier Volumes; always of a remarkable kind. This *Procureur Général de la Lanterne* has a place of his own in the history of the Revolution; there are not many notabler persons in it than he. A light harmless creature; as he says of himself, 'a man born to write verses:' but whom Destiny directed to overthrow Bastilles, and go to the guillotine for doing that. How such a man will comport himself in a French Revolution, as he from time to time turns-up there, is worth seeing. Of loose headlong character; a man stuttering in speech; stuttering, infirm in conduct too, till one huge idea laid hold of him: a man for whom Art, Fortune or himself would never do much, but to whom Nature had been very kind! One meets him always with a sort of forgiveness, almost of underhand love, as for a prodigal son. He has good gifts, and even acquirements; elegant law-scholarship, quick sense, the freest joyful heart: a fellow of endless wit, clearness, soft lambent brilliancy; on any subject you can listen to him, if without approving, yet without yawning. As a writer, in fact, there is nothing French, that we have heard of, superior or equal to him for these fifty years. Probably some French editor, some day or other, will *sift* that journalistic rubbish, and produce out of it, in small neat compass, a *Life and Remains* of this poor Camille. We pick-up three light fractions, illustrative of him and of the things he moved in; they relate to the famous Fifth of October (1789), when the women rose in insurrection. The Palais Royal and Marquis Saint-Huruge have been busy on the King's *veto*, and Lally Tollendal's proposal of an upper house:

'Was the Palais Royal so far wrong,' says Camille, 'to cry out against such things? I know that the Palais-Royal Promenade is strangely miscellaneous; that pickpockets frequently employ the *liberty of the press* there, and many a zealous patriot has lost his handkerchief in the fire of debate.

[1] Vol. ii. p. 148.

But for all that, I must bear honourable testimony to the promenaders in this Lyceum and Stoa. The Palais-Royal Garden is the focus of patriotism: there do the chosen patriots rendezvous, who have left their hearths and their provinces to witness this magnificent spectacle of the Revolution of 1789, and not to witness without aiding in it. They are Frenchmen; they have an interest in the Constitution, and a right to concur in it. How many Parisians too, instead of going to their Districts, find it shorter to come at once to the Palais Royal? Here you have not to ask a President if you may speak, and wait two hours till your turn comes. You propose your motion; if it finds supporters they set you on a chair: if you are applauded, you proceed to the redaction; if you are hissed, you go your ways. It is very much the mode the Romans followed; their Forum and our Palais Royal resemble one another.'[1]

Then, a few days farther on,—the celebrated military dinner at Versailles, with the white cockades, black cockades, and '*O Richard, O mon Roi!*' having been transacted:

'*Paris, Sunday 4th October.* The King's Wife had been so gratified with it, that this *brotherly repast* of Thursday must needs be repeated. It was so on the Saturday, and with aggravations. Our patience was worn out: you may suppose whatever patriot observers there were at Versailles hastened to Paris with the news, or at least sent-off despatches containing them. That same day (Saturday evening) all Paris set itself astir. It was a lady, first, who, seeing that her husband was not listened to at his District, came to the bar of the Café de Foi, to denounce the anti-national cockades. M. Marat flies to Versailles; returns like lightning; makes a noise like the four blasts of doom, crying to us, Awake, ye dead! Danton, on his side, sounds the alarm in the *Cordeliers*. On Sunday this immortal Cordeliers District posts its manifesto; and that very day they would have gone to Versailles, had not M. Crevecœur, their commandant, stood in the way. People seek-out their arms, however; sally-out to the streets, in chase of anti-national cockades. The law of reprisals is in force; these cockades are torn off, trampled under foot, with menace of the *Lanterne* in case of relapse. A military gentleman, picking-up his cockade, is for fastening it on again; a hundred canes

[1] Vol. ii. p. 414.

start into the air, saying *Veto*. The whole Sunday passes in hunting-down the white and the black cockades; in holding council at the Palais Royal, over the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, at the end of Bridges on the Quais. At the doors of the coffee-houses, there arise free conferences between the Upper House, of the coats that are within, and the Lower House, of jackets and wool-caps, assembled *extra muros*. It is agreed upon that the audacity of the aristocrats increases rapidly; that Madame Villepatour and the Queen's women are distributing enormous white cockades to all comers in the Œil-de-Bœuf; that M. Lecointre, having refused to take one from their hands, has all but been assassinated. It is agreed upon that we have not a moment to lose; that the boat which used to bring us flour from Corbeil morning and evening, now comes only once in two days: — do they plan to make their attack at the moment when they have kept us for eight-and-forty hours in a fasting state? It is agreed upon,' &c.[1]

—We hasten to the catastrophe, which arrives on the morrow. It is related elsewhere, in another leading article:

'At break of day, the women rush towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. All the way, they recruit fresh hands, among their own sex, to march with them; as sailors are recruited at London: there is an active press of women. The Quai de la Ferraille is covered with female crimps. The robust kitchen-maid, the slim mantua-maker, all must go to swell the phalanx; the ancient devotee, tripping to mass in the dawn, sees herself for the first time carried off, and shrieks *Help!* whilst more than one of the younger sort secretly is not so sorry at going, without mother or mistress, to Versailles to pay her respects to the august Assembly. At the same time, for the accuracy of this narrative, I must remark that these women, at least the battalion of them which encamped that night in the Assembly Hall, and had marched under the flag of M. Maillard, had among themselves a Presidentess and Staff; and that every woman, on being borrowed from her mother or husband, was presented to the Presidentess or some of her aides-de-camp, who engaged to watch over her morality, and insure her honour for this day.

'Once arrived on the Place de Grêve, these women piously begin letting down the *Lanterne;* as in great calamities, you

[1] Vol. iii. p. 63.

let down the shrine of Saint Geneviève. Next they are for mounting into the Hôtel-de-Ville. The Commandant had been forewarned of this movement; he knew that all insurrections have begun by women, whose maternal bosom the bayonet of the satellites of despotism respects. Four thousand soldiers presented a front bristling with bayonets; kept them back from the step: but behind these women there rose and grew every moment a nucleus of men, armed with pikes, axes, bills; blood is about to flow on the place; the presence of these Sabine women hindered it. The National Guard, which is not purely a machine, as the Minister of War would have the soldier be, makes use of its reason. It discerns that these women, now for Versailles, are going to the root of the mischief. The four-thousand Guards, already getting saluted with stones, think it reasonablest to open a passage; and, like waters through a broken dike, the floods of the multitude inundate the Hôtel-de-Ville.

'It is a picture interesting to paint, and one of the greatest in the Revolution, this same army of ten-thousand Judiths setting forth to cut-off the head of Holofernes; forcing the Hôtel-de-Ville; arming themselves with whatever they can lay hands on; some tying ropes to the cannon-trains, arresting carts, loading them with artillery, with powder and balls for the Versailles National Guard, which is left without ammunition; others driving-on the horses, or seated on cannon, holding the redoubtable match; seeking for their generalissimo, not aristocrats with epaulettes, but Conquerors of the Bastille!'[1]

So far Camille on veto, scarcity and the Insurrection of Women, in the end of 1789. As it is not fit that all our scenes should be of tragedy or low-tragedy, the reader will perhaps consent now to a touch of the moral-sublime. Let him enter the Hall of the Jacobins with us. All men have heard of the Jacobins' Club; but not all would think of looking for comedy or the moral-sublime there. Nevertheless so it is. Ah! the sublime of the Jacobins was not always of the *blue*-light pandemonial sort; far otherwise once! We will give this passage from the *Journal of the Jacobins' Debates;* not as one of the best, but as one of the pleasantest for English readers. Fancy that high Hall, with its seats for fifteen-hundred, 'ris-

[1] Vol. iii. p. 110.

ing in amphitheatre to the cornice of the dome ;' its Tribune elevated to mid-air ; Galleries and Ladies' Gallery full ; President seated ; shrill *Huissiers* perambulating with their rods and liveries, sounding forth "*Silence! Silence!*" Consider that it is the 18th of December 1791 (free monarchic constitution solemnly accepted six weeks ago) ; and read :

'The confluence of strangers was so great that besides the new gallery erected for them, the old ones were quite full, as well as those on the opposite side of the Hall ; and nevertheless a great multitude of citizens who could not find room or admittance on any terms.

'The reading of the announcements and select correspondence was scarcely begun, when the Hall resounded with applauses at the entrance of the three united Flags, of the English, the American and French Nation, which were to be placed in the Hall ; as the Society of *Friends of the Revolution* in London had placed them in theirs.

'Cries of "Liberty forever! The Nation forever! The three Free Peoples of the Universe forever (*Vivent les trois peuples libres de l'univers*)!" are re-echoed with enthusiasm by the galleries and visitors : the expression, no less sincere than lively, of that ardour, of that love for Equality and Brotherhood, which Nature has engraved in the hearts of all men ; and which nothing but the continued efforts of despots, in all classes, have managed to efface more or less.

'A Deputation of Ladies is introduced ; Ladies accustomed to honour the galleries with their presence : they had solicited permission to offer a pledge of their enthusiasm for Liberty to the Constitutional Whig, who came lately to the National Assembly with the congratulation of this class of free Englishmen.

'The Deputation enters, amid the applauses of the meeting : a young Citizeness carries in her hand the Gift of these Ladies, lays it on the President's table, while the Lady-Deputies mount to the Tribune, to pronounce the following discourse.

'*The Lady-speaker.* We are not Roman Dames ; we bring no jewels ; but a tribute of gratitude for the feelings you have inspired us with. A Constitutional Whig (*Wigh*), a Brother, an Englishman, formed, few days ago, the object of one of your sweetest unitings (*étreintes*). What a charm had that picture! Souls of sensibility were struck with it ;

our hearts are yet full of emotion (*Applause*). This day you afford to that Brother, and to yourselves, a new enjoyment: you suspend to the dome of our temple three Flags, American, English, French.

'*From all sides.* The Three Nations, *Vivent les trois nations! Vive la liberté!*

'*Lady-speaker.* The union of the Three free Peoples is to be cemented: forbid not us also, Messieurs, to contribute towards that. Your pure feelings prescribe it for us as a duty. Messieurs, accept a garland.—And you, English Brother, accept another from the hands of innocence: it is the work of sisterhood; friendship gives it you. Receive also, O good Patriot, in the name of the French *Citoyennes* who are here, this Ark of Alliance, which we have brought for our brethren the Constitutional Whigs (*Wighs*): within it are enclosed the Map of France, divided into eighty-three departments; the Cap of Liberty (*Applause*); the Book of the French Constitution; a Civic Crown; some Ears of Wheat (*Applause*); three Flags; a National Cockade; and these words in the two languages, *To live free or die.*

'*The whole Hall.* To live free or die!

'*Lady-speaker.* Let this immortal homage done to Liberty be, for the English and the French, a sacred pledge of their union. Forget not to tell our brothers how you have received it. Let it be deposited with the brotherliest ceremonial! Invite all Englishmen to participate in this family act. Let it be precious to them as Nature herself.—Tell your wives, repeat to your children, that innocent maids, faithful spouses, tender mothers, after having done their household duties, and contributed to make their families and husbands happy, came and made this offering to their Country. Let one cry of gladness peal over Europe; let it roll across the waters to America. Hark! Amid the echoes, Philadelphia and the Far West repeat like us, *Liberty forever!*

'*The whole Hall.* Liberty forever!

'*Lady-speaker.* Tyrants! your enemies declare themselves. Nations will no longer battle with each other; straitly united, they will possess all Languages, and make of them but one Language. Strong in their Freedom they will be inseparable forever.—

'Universal applauses: the Hall resounds long with cries, repeated by the Galleries and the Society, of *Vive la Nation, Vive la Liberté!* The Three Nations! The Patriot Women!

'*M. de la Source, Vice-president.* Since Nature has willed that the world should owe to you its sweetest moments, this enthusiasm of yours with which you fill all hearts shall never be lost, never forgotten in the flight of ages: it stands engraved on our hearts in indelible characters.—(*Then turning to the Deputies of the Whigs.*) As for you, Brothers, tell your countrymen what we are; tell them that in France the women too can love their country and show themselves worthy of Liberty; tell them that the union, of which you see the emblems, shall be imperishable as the Free Peoples are, that we have henceforth only one sort of bonds, the bonds which unite us to the Free, and that these shall be eternal as virtue.

'*The Whig Deputy.* Mesdames and M. le Président, I really am not prepared to make a speech' (how true to the "leg-of-mutton or postprandial style!")—'for really I did not expect such a reception; but I hope you will excuse me. I have written to England, I have described the reception I met with here: I have had answers, but not from our Society, because that requires time; the Society must meet first and then answer.—I wish it were in my power' (postprandially!) 'to express what my heart feels. This feeling towards you is not the work of a day, but indeed that of a year (!), for in August last, our Society wrote to M. Pétion, who, however, assures me that the Letter never reached him; and therefore—'[1]

—and so on, in the postprandial style; bringing down matters to the solid business-level again. Few readers, it is to be expected, have witnessed on the unelastic stage of mere Earth anything so dramatic as this.

We terminate with a scene of a very different complexion, though but some few months farther on, that is to say in *September* 1792! Félémhesi (anagram for *Méhée Fils*), in his *Vérité toute entière*, a Pamphlet really more veracious than most, thus testifies, after a good deal of preambling:

'I was going to my post about half-past two' (Sunday the 2d of September, tocsins all ringing, and Brunswick just at hand); 'I was passing along the Rue Dauphine; suddenly I hear hisses. I look, I observe four hackney-coaches, coming in a train, escorted by the Fédérés of the Departments.

'Each of these coaches contained four persons: they were

[1] Tome xii. 379.

individuals' (priests) 'arrested in the preceding domiciliary visits. Billaud-Varennes, Procureur-Substitute of the Commune, had just been interrogating them at the Hôtel-de-Ville; and now they were proceeding towards the Abbaye, to be provisionally detained there. A crowd is gathering; the cries and hisses redouble: one of the prisoners, doubtless out of his senses, takes fire at these murmurs, puts his arm over the coach-door, gives one of the Fédérés a stroke over the head with his cane. The Fédéré, in a rage, draws his sabre, springs on the carriage-steps, and plunges it thrice-over into the heart of his aggressor. I saw the blood come out in great jets. "Kill every one of them; they are scoundrels, aristocrats!" cry the people. The Fédérés all draw their sabres, and instantly kill the three companions of the one who had just perished. I saw, at this moment, a young man in a white nightgown stretch himself out of that same carriage: his countenance, expressive but pale and worn, indicated that he was very sick; he had gathered his staggering strength, and, though already wounded, was crying still, "*Grâce, grâce*, Mercy, pardon!" but in vain;—a mortal stroke united him to the lot of the others.

'This coach, which was the hindmost, now held nothing but corpses; it had not stopped during the carnage, which lasted about the space of two minutes. The crowd increases, *crescit eundo;* the yells redouble. The coaches are at the Abbaye. The corpses are hurled into the court; the twelve living prisoners dismount to enter the committee-room. Two are sacrificed on alighting; ten succeed in entering. The committee had not had time to put the slightest question, when a multitude, armed with pikes, sabres, swords and bayonets, dashes in, seizes the accused, and kills them. One prisoner, already much wounded, kept hanging by the skirts of a Committee-member, and still struggled against death.

'Three yet remained; one of whom was the Abbé Sicard, Teacher of the Deaf and Dumb. The sabres were already over his head, when Monnot, the watchmaker, flung himself before them, crying, "Kill me rather, and not this man, who is useful to our country!" These words, uttered with the fire and impetuosity of a generous soul, suspended death. Profiting by this moment of calm, Abbé Sicard and the other two were got conveyed into the back part of the room.'

Abbé Sicard, as is well known, survived; and the narrative which he also published exists,—sufficient to prove, among

other things, that 'Fclémhesi' had but two eyes, and his own share of sagacity and heart; that he has *mis*seen, miscounted, and, knowingly or unknowingly, misstated not a little,—as one poor man, in these circumstances, might. Fclémhesi continues, we only inverting his arrangement somewhat:

'Twelve scoundrels, presided by Maillard, with whom they had probably combined this project beforehand, find themselves "by chance" among the crowd; and now, being well-known one to another, they unite themselves "in the name of the sovereign people," whether it were of their own private audacity, or that they had secretly received superior orders. They lay hold of the prison-registers, and turn them over; the turnkeys fall a-trembling; the jailor's wife and the jailor faint; the prison is surrounded by furious men; there is shouting, clamouring: the door is assaulted, like to be forced; when one of the Committee-members presents himself at the outer gate, and begs audience: his signs obtain a moment of silence; the doors open, he advances, gets a chair, mounts on it, and speaks: "Comrades, friends," said he, "you are good patriots; your resentment is just. Open war to the enemies of the common good; neither truce nor mercy; it is a war to the death! I feel, like you, that they must all perish. And yet, if you are good citizens, you must love justice. There is not one of you but would shudder at the notion of shedding innocent blood." "Yes, yes!" reply the people.—"Well, then, I ask of you if, without inquiry or investigation, you fling yourselves like mad tigers on your fellowmen——?" Here the speaker is interrupted by one of the crowd, who, with a bloody sabre in his hand, his eyes glancing with rage, cleaves the press, and refutes him in these terms: "Tell us, Monsieur le Citoyen, explain to us then, would the *sacrés gueux* of Prussians and Austrians, if they were at Paris, investigate for the guilty? Would they not cut to the right and left, as the Swiss on the Tenth of August did? Well! I am no speaker, I cannot stuff the ears of any one: but I tell you, I have a wife and five children, whom I leave with my Section here, while I go and fight the enemy: and it is not my bargain that the villains in this Prison, whom other villains outside will open the door to, shall go and kill my wife and children in the mean while! I have three boys, who I hope will be usefuller to their country one day than these rascals you want to save. Any way, you have but to send them out; we will give them arms, and

fight them number for number. Die here, or die on the frontiers, I am sure enough to be killed by these villains, one day; but I mean to sell them my life; and, be it I, be it others, the Prison shall be purged of these *sacrés gueux là*." "He is right!" responds the general cry.'—And so the frightful 'purgation' proceeds.

'At five in the afternoon, Billaud-Varennes, Procureur-Substitute, arrives; he had on his sash, and the small puce coat and black wig we are used to see on him: walking over carcasses, he makes a short harangue to the people, and ends thus: "People, thou art sacrificing thy enemies; thou art in thy duty." This cannibal speech lends them new animation. The killers blaze-up, cry louder than ever for new victims:—how to stanch this new thirst of blood? A voice speaks from beside Billaud; it was Maillard's voice: "There is nothing more to do here; let us to the *Carmes!*" They run thither: in five minutes more, I saw them trailing corpses by the heels. A killer (I cannot say a man), in very coarse clothes, had, as it would seem, been specially commissioned to despatch the Abbé Lenfant; for, apprehensive lest the prey might be missed, he takes water, flings it on the corpses, washes their blood-smeared faces, turns them over, and seems at last to ascertain that the Abbé Lenfant is among them.'[1]

This is the September Massacre, the last Scene we can give as a specimen. Thus, in these curious records of the *Histoire Parlementaire*, as in some Ezekiel Vision become real, does Scene after Scene disclose itself, now in rose-light, now in sulphurous black, and grow ever more fitful, dreamlike,—till the Vendémiaire Scene come, and Napoleon blow forth his grape-shot, and Sansculottism be no more!

Touching the political and metaphysical speculations of our two Editors, we shall say little. They are of the sort we lamented in Mignet, and generally in Frenchmen of this day: a jingling of formulas;—unfruitful as that Kalmuck prayer! Perhaps the strangest-looking particular doctrine we have noticed is this: that the French Revolution was at bottom an attempt to realise Christianity, and fairly put it in action, in our world. For eighteen centuries (it is not denied) men had been doing more or less that way; but they set their

[1] Vol. xviii. p. 169.

shoulder rightly to the wheel, and gave a dead-lift, for the first time *then*. Good M. Roux! And yet the good Roux does mean something by this; and even something true. But a marginal annotator has written on our copy, 'For the love of Heaven, Messieurs, *humez vos formules:*' make away with your formulas; take off your facetted spectacles; open your eyes a little, and look! There is, indeed, here and there, considerable rumbling of the rotatory calabash, which rattles and rumbles, concerning Progress of the Species, *Doctrine du Progrès, Exploitations le Christ, le Verbe*, and what not; written in a vein of deep, even of intense seriousness; but profitable, one would think, to no man or woman. In this style, M. Roux (for it is he, we understand) painfully composes a Preface to each Volume, and has even given a whole introductory History of France: we read some seven or eight of his first Prefaces, hoping always to get some nourishment; but seldom or never cut him open now. Fighting, in that way, behind cover, he is comparatively harmless; merely wasting you so many pence per number: happily the space he takes is small. Whoever wants to form for himself an image of the actual state of French Meditation, and under what surprising shackles a French thinking man of these days finds himself gyved, and mechanised, and reduced to the verge of *zero*, may open M. Roux's Prefaces, and see it as in an expressive summary.

We wish our two French friends all speed in their business; and do again honestly recommend this *Histoire Parlementaire* to any and all of our English friends who take interest in that subject.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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SIR WALTER SCOTT.[1]

[1838.]

American Cooper asserts, in one of his books, that there is 'an instinctive tendency in men to look at any man who has become distinguished.' True, surely: as all observation and survey of mankind, from China to Peru, from Nebuchadnezzar to Old Hickory, will testify! Why do men crowd towards the improved-drop at Newgate, eager to catch a sight? The man about to be hanged is in a distinguished situation. Men crowd to such extent, that Greenacre's is not the only life choked-out there. Again, ask of these leathern vehicles, cabriolets, neat-flies, with blue men and women in them, that scour all thoroughfares, Whither so fast? To see dear Mrs. Rigmarole, the distinguished female; great Mr. Rigmarole, the distinguished male! Or, consider that crowning phenomenon, and summary of modern civilisation, a *soirée* of lions. Glittering are the rooms, well-lighted, thronged; bright flows their undulatory flood of blonde-gowns and dress-coats, a soft smile dwelling on all faces; for behold there also flow the lions, hovering distinguished: oracles of the age, of one sort or another. Oracles really pleasant to see; whom it is worth while to go and see: look at them, but inquire not of them, depart rather and be thankful. For your lion-*soirée* admits not of speech; there lies the specialty of it. A meeting together of human creatures; and yet (so high has civilisation gone) the primary aim of human meeting, that soul might in some articulate utterance unfold itself to soul, can be dis-

[1] London and Westminster Review, No. 12.—*Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Baronet.* Vols. i.–vi. Edinburgh, 1837.

pensed with in it. Utterance there is not; nay there is a certain grinning play of tongue-fence, and make-believe of utterance, considerably worse than none. For which reason it has been suggested, with an eye to sincerity and silence in such lion-*soirées*, Might not each lion be, for example, ticketed, as wine-decanters are? Let him carry, slung round him, in such ornamental manner as seemed good, his silver label with name engraved; you lift his label, and read it, with what farther ocular survey you find useful, and speech is not needed at all. O Fenimore Cooper, it is most true there is 'an instinctive tendency in men to look at any man that has become distinguished;' and, moreover, an instinctive desire in men to become distinguished and be looked at!

For the rest, we will call it a most valuable tendency this; indispensable to mankind. Without it, where were star-and-garter, and significance of rank; where were all ambition, money-getting, respectability of gig or no gig; and, in a word, the main impetus by which society moves, the main force by which it hangs together? A tendency, we say, of manifold results; of manifold origin, not ridiculous only, but sublime; —which some incline to deduce from the mere gregarious purblind nature of man, prompting him to run, 'as dim-eyed animals do, towards any glittering object, were it but a scoured tankard, and mistake it for a solar luminary,' or even 'sheep-like, to run and crowd because many *have* already run!' It is, indeed, curious to consider how men do make the gods that themselves worship. For the most famed man, round whom all the world rapturously huzzahs and venerates, as if his like were not, is the same man whom all the world was wont to jostle into the kennels; not a changed man, but in every fibre of him the same man. Foolish world, what went ye out to see? A tankard scoured bright: and do there not lie, of the self-same pewter, whole barrowfuls of tankards, though by worst fortune all still in the dim state?

And yet, at bottom, it is not merely our gregarious sheep-like quality, but something better, and indeed best: what has been called 'the perpetual fact of hero-worship;' our inborn sincere love of great men! Not the gilt farthing, for its own

sake, do even fools covet ; but the gold guinea which they mistake it for. Veneration of great men is perennial in the nature of man ; this, in all times, especially in these, is one of the blessedest facts predicable of him. In all times, even in these seemingly so disobedient times, 'it remains a blessed fact, so cunningly has Nature ordered it, *that whatsoever man ought to obey, he cannot but obey.* Show the dullest clodpole, show the haughtiest featherhead, that a soul higher than himself is actually here ; were his knees stiffened into brass, he must down and worship.' So it has been written ; and may be cited and repeated till known to all. Understand it well, this of 'hero-worship' was the primary creed, and has intrinsically been the secondary and ternary, and will be the ultimate and final creed of mankind ; indestructible, changing in shape, but in essence unchangeable ; whereon politics, religions, loyalties, and all highest human interests have been and can be built, as on a rock that will endure while man endures. Such is hero-worship ; so much lies in that our inborn sincere love of great men !—In favour of which unspeakable benefits of the reality, what can we do but cheerfully pardon the multiplex ineptitudes of the semblance ; cheerfully wish even lion-*soirées*, with labels for their lions or without that improvement, all manner of prosperity? Let hero-worship flourish, say we : and the more and more assiduous chase after gilt farthings while guineas are not yet forthcoming. Herein, at lowest, is proof that guineas exist, that they are believed to exist, and valued. Find great men if you can ; if you cannot, still quit not the search ; in defect of great men, let there be noted men, in such number, to such degree of intensity as the public appetite can tolerate.

Whether Sir Walter Scott was a great man, is still a question with some ; but there can be no question with any one that he was a most noted and even notable man. In this generation there was no literary man with such a popularity in any country ; there have only been a few with such, taking-in all generations and all countries. Nay, it is farther to be admitted that Sir Walter Scott's popularity was of a select sort rather ; not a popularity of the populace. His admirers

were at one time almost all the intelligent of civilised countries; and to the last, included and do still include a great portion of that sort. Such fortune he had, and has continued to maintain for a space of some twenty or thirty years. So long the observed of all observers; a great man, or only a considerable man; here surely, if ever, is a singularly circumstanced, is a 'distinguished' man! In regard to whom, therefore, the 'instinctive tendency' on other men's part cannot be wanting. Let men look, where the world has already so long looked. And now, while the new, earnestly expected *Life* 'by his son-in-law and literary executor' again summons the whole world's attention round him, probably for the last time it will ever be so summoned; and men are in some sort taking leave of a notability, and about to go their way, and commit him to his fortune on the flood of things,—why should not this Periodical Publication likewise publish its thought about him? Readers of miscellaneous aspect, of unknown quantity and quality, are waiting to hear it done. With small inward vocation, but cheerfully obedient to destiny and necessity, the present reviewer will follow a multitude: to do evil or to do no evil, will depend not on the multitude but on himself. One thing he did decidedly wish; at least to wait till the Work were finished: for the Six promised Volumes, as the world knows, have flowed over into a Seventh, which will not for some weeks yet see the light. But the editorial powers, wearied with waiting, have become peremptory; and declare that, finished or not finished, they will have their hands washed of it at this opening of the year. Perhaps it is best. The physiognomy of Scott will not be much altered for us by that Seventh Volume; the prior Six have altered it but little; —as, indeed, a man who has written some two-hundred volumes of his own, and lived for thirty years amid the universal speech of friends, must have already left some likeness of himself. Be it as the peremptory editorial powers require.

First, therefore, a word on the *Life* itself. Mr. Lockhart's known powers justify strict requisition in his case. Our verdict in general would be, that he has accomplished the work he schemed for himself in a creditable workmanlike manner.

It is true, his notion of what the work was, does not seem to have been very elevated. To picture-forth the life of Scott according to any rules of art or composition, so that a reader, on adequately examining it, might say to himself, "There is Scott, there is the physiognomy and meaning of Scott's appearance and transit on this earth; such was he by nature, so did the world act on him, so he on the world, with such result and significance for himself and us:" this was by no manner of means Mr. Lockhart's plan. A plan which, it is rashly said, should preside over every biography! It might have been fulfilled with all degrees of perfection, from that of the *Odyssey* down to *Thomas Ellwood* or lower. For there is no heroic poem in the world but is at bottom a biography, the life of a man: also, it may be said, there is no life of a man, faithfully recorded, but is a heroic poem of its sort, rhymed or unrhymed. It is a plan one would prefer, did it otherwise suit; which it does not, in these days. Seven volumes sell so much dearer than one; are so much easier to write than one. The *Odyssey*, for instance, what were the value of the *Odyssey* sold per sheet? One paper of *Pickwick*, or say, the inconsiderable fraction of one. This, in commercial algebra, were the equation: *Odyssey* equal to *Pickwick* divided by an unknown integer.

There is a great discovery still to be made in Literature, that of paying literary men by the quantity they *do not* write. Nay, in sober truth, is not this actually the rule in all writing; and, moreover, in all conduct and acting? Not what stands aboveground, but what lies unseen *under* it, as the root and subterrene element it sprang from and emblemed forth, determines the value. Under all speech that is good for anything there lies a silence that is better. Silence is deep as Eternity; speech is shallow as Time. Paradoxical does it seem? Woe for the age, woe for the man, quack-ridden, bespeeched, bespouted, blown about like barren Sahara, to whom this world-old truth were altogether strange!—Such we say is the rule, acted on or not, recognised or not; and he who departs from it, what can he do but spread himself into breadth and length, into superficiality and salability; and, except as filigree,

become comparatively useless? One thinks, Had but the hogshead of thin wash, which sours in a week ready for the kennels, been *distilled*, been concentrated! Our dear Fenimore Cooper, whom we started with, might, in that way, have given us one *Natty Leatherstocking*, one melodious synopsis of Man and Nature in the West (for it lay in him to do it), almost as a Saint-Pierre did for the Islands of the East; and the hundred Incoherences, cobbled hastily together by order of Colburn and Company, had slumbered in Chaos, as all incoherences ought if possible to do. Verily this same genius of diffuse-writing, of diffuse-acting, is a Moloch; and souls pass through the fire to him, more than enough. Surely, if ever discovery was valuable and needful, it were that above indicated, of paying by the work *not* visibly done!—Which needful discovery we will give the whole projecting, railwaying, knowledge-diffusing, march-of-intellect and otherwise promotive and locomotive societies in the Old and New World, any required length of centuries to make. Once made, such discovery once made, we too will fling cap into the air, and shout, "*Io Pæan!* the Devil *is* conquered;"—and, in the *mean* while, study to think it nothing miraculous that seven biographical volumes are given where one had been better; and that several other things happen, very much as they from of old were known to do, and are like to continue doing.

Mr. Lockhart's aim, we take it, was not that of producing any such highflown work of art as we hint at: or indeed to do much other than to print, intelligibly bound together by order of time, and by some requisite intercalary exposition, all such letters, documents and notices about Scott as he found lying suitable, and as it seemed likely the world would undertake to read. His Work, accordingly, is not so much a composition, as what we may call a compilation well done. Neither is this a task of no difficulty; this too is a task that may be performed with extremely various degrees of talent; from the *Life and Correspondence of Hannah More*, for instance, up to this *Life of Scott*, there is a wide range indeed! Let us take the Seven Volumes, and be thankful that they are genuine in their kind. Nay, as to that of their being seven and not one,

it is right to say that the public so required it. To have done other, would have shown little policy in an author. Had Mr. Lockhart laboriously compressed himself, and instead of well-done compilation, brought out the well-done composition, in one volume instead of seven, which not many men in England are better qualified to do, there can be no doubt but his readers for the time had been immeasurably fewer. If the praise of magnanimity be denied him, that of prudence must be conceded, which perhaps he values more.

The truth is, the work, done in this manner too, was good to have: Scott's Biography, if uncomposed, lies printed and indestructible here, in the elementary state, and can at any time be composed, if necessary, by whosoever has a call to that. As it is, as it was meant to be, we repeat, the work is vigorously done. Sagacity, decision, candour, diligence, good manners, good sense: these qualities are throughout observable. The dates, calculations, statements, we suppose to be all accurate; much laborious inquiry, some of it impossible for another man, has been gone into, the results of which are imparted with due brevity. Scott's letters, not interesting generally, yet never absolutely without interest, are copiously given; copiously, but with selection; the answers to them still more select. Narrative, delineation, and at length personal reminiscences, occasionally of much merit, of a certain rough force, sincerity and picturesqueness, duly intervene. The scattered members of Scott's Life do lie here, and could be disentangled. In a word, this compilation is the work of a manful, clear-seeing, conclusive man, and has been executed with the faculty and combination of faculties the public had a right to expect from the name attached to it.

One thing we hear greatly blamed in Mr. Lockhart: that he has been too communicative, indiscreet, and has recorded much that ought to have lain suppressed. Persons are mentioned, and circumstances, not always of an ornamental sort. It would appear there is far less reticence than was looked for! Various persons, name and surname, have 'received pain:' nay the very Hero of the Biography is rendered unheroic; unornamental facts of him, and of those he had to do

with, being set forth in plain English: hence 'personality,' 'indiscretion,' or worse, 'sanctities of private life,' &c., &c. How delicate, decent is English Biography, bless its mealy mouth! A Damocles' sword of *Respectability* hangs forever over the poor English Life-writer (as it does over poor English Life in general), and reduces him to the verge of paralysis. Thus it has been said, 'there are no English lives 'worth reading except those of Players, who by the nature of the case have bidden Respectability good-day.' The English biographer has long felt that if in writing his Man's Biography, he wrote down anything that could by possibility offend any man, he had written wrong. The plain consequence was, that, properly speaking, no biography whatever could be produced. The poor biographer, having the fear *not* of God before his eyes, was obliged to retire as it were into vacuum; and write in the most melancholy straitened manner, with only vacuum for a result. Vain that he wrote, and that we kept reading volume on volume: there was no biography, but some vague ghost of a biography, white, stainless; without feature or substance; *vacuum*, as we say, and wind and shadow,—which indeed the material of it was.

No man lives without jostling and being jostled; in all ways he has to *elbow* himself through the world, giving and receiving offence. His life is a battle, in so far as it is an entity at all. The very oyster, we suppose, comes in collision with oysters: undoubtedly enough it does come in collision with Necessity and Difficulty; and helps itself through, not as a perfect ideal oyster, but as an imperfect real one. Some kind of remorse must be known to the oyster; certain hatreds, certain pusillanimities. But as for man, his conflict is continual with the spirit of contradiction, that is without and within; with the evil spirit (or call it, with the weak, most necessitous, pitiable spirit), that is in others and in himself. His walk, like all walking (say the mechanicians), is a series of *falls*. To paint man's life is to represent these things. Let them be represented, fitly, with dignity and measure; but above all, let them be represented. No tragedy of *Hamlet* with the part of Hamlet omitted by particular desire! No

ghost of a biography, let the Damocles' sword of Respectability (which, after all, is but a pasteboard one) threaten as it will! One hopes that the public taste is much mended in this matter; that vacuum-biographies, with a good many other vacuities related to them, are withdrawn or withdrawing into vacuum. Probably it was Mr. Lockhart's feeling of what the great public would approve, that led him, open-eyed, into this offence against the small criticising public: we joyfully accept the omen.

Perhaps then, of all the praises copiously bestowed on his Work, there is none in reality so creditable to him as this same censure, which has also been pretty copious. It is a censure better than a good many praises. He is found guilty of having said this and that, calculated not to be entirely pleasant to this man and that; in other words, calculated to give him and the thing he worked in a living set of features, not leave him vague, in the white beatified-ghost condition. Several men, as we hear, cry out, "See, there is something written not entirely pleasant to me!" Good friend, it is pity; but who can help it? They that will crowd about bonfires may, sometimes very fairly, get their beards singed; it is the price they pay for such illumination; natural twilight is safe and free to all. For our part, we hope all manner of biographies that are written in England will henceforth be written so. If it is fit that they be written otherwise, then it is still fitter that they be not written at all: to produce not things but ghosts of things can never be the duty of man. The biographer has this problem set before him: to delineate a likeness of the earthly pilgrimage of a man. He will compute well what profit is in it, and what disprofit; under which latter head this of offending any of his fellow-creatures will surely not be forgotten. Nay, this may so swell the disprofit side of his account, that many an enterprise of biography, otherwise promising, shall require to be renounced. But once taken up, the rule before all rules is to do *it*, not to do the ghost of it. In speaking of the man and men he has to deal with, he will of course keep all his charities about him; but all his eyes open. Far be it from him to set down aught

untrue; nay, not to abstain from, and leave in oblivion, much that is true. But having found a thing or things essential for his subject, and well computed the for and against, he will in very deed set down such thing or things, nothing doubting,—*having*, we may say, the fear of God before his eyes, and no other fear whatever. Censure the biographer's prudence; dissent from the computation he made, or agree with it; be all malice of his, be all falsehood, nay be all offensive avoidable inaccuracy, condemned and consumed but know that by this plan only, executed as was possible could the biographer hope to make a biography; and blame him not that he did what it had been the worst fault not to do.

As to the accuracy or error of these statements about the Ballantynes and other persons aggrieved, which are questions much mooted at present in some places, we know nothing at all. If they are inaccurate, let them be corrected; if the inaccuracy was avoidable, let the author bear rebuke and punishment for it. We can only say, these things carry no look of inaccuracy on the face of them; neither is anywhere the smallest trace of ill-will or unjust feeling descernible. Decidedly the probabilities are, and till better evidence arise, the fair conclusion is, that this matter stands very much as it ought to do. Let the clatter of censure, therefore, propagate itself as far as it can. For Mr. Lockhart it virtually amounts to this very considerable praise, that, standing full in the face of the public, he has set at naught, and been among the first to do it, a public piece of cant; one of the commonest we have, and closely allied to many others of the fellest sort, as smooth as it looks.

The other censure, of Scott being made unheroic, springs from the same stem; and is, perhaps, a still more wonderful flower of it. Your true hero must have no features, but be white, stainless, an impersonal ghost-hero! But connected with this, there is a hypothesis now current, due, probably to some man of name, for its own force would not carry it far: That Mr. Lockhart at heart has a dislike to Scott, and has done his best in an underhand treacherous manner to dishero him! Such hypothesis is actually current: he that has ears

may hear it now and then. On which astonishing hypothesis, if a word must be said, it can only be an apology for silence,—"That there are things at which one stands struck silent, as at first sight of the Infinite." For if Mr. Lockhart is fairly chargeable with any radical defect, if on any side his insight entirely fails him, it seems even to be in this, that Scott is altogether lovely to him; that Scott's greatness spreads out for him on all hands beyond reach of eye; that his very faults become beautiful, his vulgar worldlinesses are solid prudences, proprieties; and of his worth there is no measure. Does not the patient Biographer dwell on his *Abbots*, *Pirates*, and hasty theatrical scene-paintings: affectionately analysing them, as if they were Raphael pictures, time-defying *Hamlets*, *Othellos?* The Novel-manufactory, with its 15,000*l.* a-year, is sacred to him as creation of a genius, which carries the noble victor up to Heaven. Scott is to Lockhart the unparalleled of the time; an object spreading-out before him like a sea without shore. Of *that* astonishing hypothesis, let expressive silence be the only answer.

And so in sum, with regard to *Lockhart's Life of Scott*, readers that believe in us shall read it with the feeling that a man of talent, decision and insight wrote it; wrote it in seven volumes, not in one, because the public would pay for it better in that state; but wrote it with courage, with frankness, sincerity; on the whole, in a very readable, recommendable manner, as things go. Whosoever needs it can purchase it, or purchase the loan of it, with assurance more than usual that he has ware for his money. And now enough of the written *Life;* we will glance a little at the man and his acted life.

Into the question whether Scott was a great man or not, we do not propose to enter deeply. It is, as too usual, a question about words. There can be no doubt but many men have been named and printed *great* who were vastly smaller than he: as little doubt moreover that of the specially *good*, a very large portion, according to any genuine standard of man's worth, were worthless in comparison to him. He for whom

Scott is great may most innocently name him so; may with advantage admire his great qualities, and ought with sincere heart to emulate them. At the same time, it is good that there be a certain degree of precision in our epithets. It is good to understand, for one thing, that no popularity and open-mouthed wonder of all the world, continued even for a long series of years, can make a man great. Such popularity is a remarkable fortune; indicates a great adaptation of the man to his element of circumstances; but may or may not indicate anything great in the man. To our imagination, as above hinted, there is a certain apotheosis in it; but in the reality no apotheosis at all. Popularity is as a blaze of illumination, or alas, of conflagration, kindled round a man; *showing* what is in him; not putting the smallest item more into him; often abstracting much from him; conflagrating the poor man himself into ashes and *caput mortuum!* And then, by the nature of it, such popularity is transient; your 'series of years,' quite unexpectedly, sometimes almost all on a sudden, terminates! For the stupidity of men, especially of men congregated in masses round any object, is extreme. What illuminations and conflagrations have kindled themselves, as if new heavenly suns had risen, which proved only to be tar-barrels, and terrestrial locks of straw! Profane Princesses cried out, "One God, one Farinelli!"—and whither now have they and Farinelli danced? In Literature too, there have been seen popularities greater even than Scott's, and nothing perennial in the interior of them. Lope de Vega, whom all the world swore by, and made a proverb of; who could make an acceptable five-act tragedy in almost as many hours; the greatest of all popularities past or present, and perhaps one of the greatest men that ever ranked among popularities: Lope himself, so radiant, far-shining, has not proved to be a sun or star of the firmament; but is as good as lost and gone out; or plays at best, in the eyes of some few, as a vague aurora-borealis, and brilliant ineffectuality. The great man of Spain sat obscure at the time, all dark and poor, a maimed soldier; writing his *Don Quixote* in prison. And Lope's fate withal was sad, his popularity perhaps a curse to him; for in

this man there was something ethereal too, a divine particle traceable in few other popular men; and such far-shining diffusion of himself, though all the world swore by it, would do nothing for the true life of him even while he lived: he had to creep into a convent, into a monk's cowl, and learn, with infinite sorrow, that his blessedness had lain elsewhere; that when a man's life feels itself to be sick and an error, no voting of by-standers can make it well and a truth again. Or coming down to our own times, was not August Kotzebue popular? Kotzebue, not so many years since, saw himself, if rumour and hand-clapping could be credited, the greatest man going; saw visibly his Thoughts, dressed-out in plush and pasteboard, permeating and perambulating civilised Europe; the most iron visages weeping with him, in all theatres from Cadiz to Kamtschatka; his own 'astonishing genius,' meanwhile, producing two tragedies or so per month: he, on the whole, blazed high enough: he too has gone out into Night and *Orcus*, and already is not. We will omit this of popularity altogether; and account it as making simply nothing towards Scott's greatness or non-greatness, as an accident, not a quality.

Shorn of this falsifying *nimbus*, and reduced to his own natural dimensions, there remains the reality, Walter Scott, and what we can find in him: to be accounted great, or not great, according to the dialects of men. Friends to precision of epithet will probably deny his title to the name 'great.' It seems to us there goes other stuff to the making of great men than can be detected here. One knows not what idea worthy of the name of great, what purpose, instinct or tendency, that could be called great, Scott ever was inspired with. His life was worldly; his ambitions were worldly. There is nothing spiritual in him; all is economical, material, of the earth earthy. A love of picturesque, of beautiful, vigorous and graceful things; a genuine love, yet not more genuine than has dwelt in hundreds of men named minor poets; this is the highest quality to be discerned in him. His power of representing these things too, his poetic power, like his moral power, was a genius *in extenso*, as we may say,

not *in intenso*. In action, in speculation, *broad* as he was, he rose nowhere high; productive without measure as to quantity, in quality he for the most part transcended but a little way the region of commonplace. It has been said, 'no man has written as many volumes with so few sentences that can be quoted.' Winged words were not his vocation; nothing urged him that way: the great Mystery of Existence was not great to him; did not drive him into rocky solitudes to wrestle with it for an answer, to be answered or to perish. He had nothing of the martyr; into no 'dark region to slay monsters for us,' did he, either led or driven, venture down: his conquests were for his own behoof mainly, conquests over common market labour, and reckonable in good metallic coin of the realm. The thing he had faith in, except power, power of what sort soever, and even of the rudest sort, would be difficult to point out. One sees not that he believed in anything; nay, he did not even disbelieve; but quietly acquiesced, and made himself at home in a world of conventionalities; the false, the semi-false and the true were alike true in this, that they were there, and had power in their hands more or less. It was well to feel so; and yet not well! We find it written, 'Woe to them that are at ease in Zion;' but surely it is a double woe to them that are at ease in Babel, in Domdaniel. On the other hand, he wrote many volumes, amusing many thousands of men. Shall we call this great? It seems to us there dwells and struggles another sort of spirit in the inward parts of great men!

Brother Ringletub, the missionary, inquired of Ram-Dass, a Hindoo man-god, who had set up for godhood lately, What he meant to do, then, with the sins of mankind? To which Ram-Dass at once answered, He had *fire enough in his belly* to burn-up all the sins in the world. Ram-Dass was right so far, and had a spice of sense in him; for surely it is the test of every divine man this same, and without it he is not divine or great,—that he *have* fire in him to burn-up somewhat of the sins of the world, of the miseries and errors of the world: why else is he there? Far be it from us to say that a great man must needs, with benevolence prepense, become a 'friend

of humanity;' nay, that such professional self-conscious friends of humanity are not the fatallest kind of persons to be met with in our day. All greatness is unconscious, or it is little and naught. And yet a great man without *such* fire in him, burning dim or developed, as a divine behest in his heart of hearts, never resting till it be fulfilled, were a solecism in Nature. A great man is ever, as the Transcendentalists speak, possessed with an *idea*. Napoleon himself, not the superfinest of great men, and ballasted sufficiently with prudences and egoisms, had nevertheless, as is clear enough, an idea to start with: the idea that Democracy was the Cause of Man, the right and infinite Cause. Accordingly he made himself 'the armed Soldier of Democracy;' and did vindicate it in a rather great manner. Nay, to the very last, he had a kind of idea; that, namely, of '*La carrière ouverte aux talens*, The tools to him that can handle them;' really one of the best ideas yet promulgated on that matter, or rather the one true central idea, towards which all the others, if they tend anywhither, must tend. Unhappily it was in the military province only that Napoleon could realise this idea of his, being forced to fight for himself the while: before he got it tried to any extent in the civil province of things, his head by much victory grew light (no head can stand more than its quantity); and he lost head, as they say, and became a selfish ambitionist and quack, and was hurled out; leaving his idea to be realised, in the civil province of things, by others! Thus was Napoleon; thus are all great men: children of the idea; or, in Ram-Dass's phraseology, furnished with fire to burn-up the miseries of men. Conscious or unconscious, latent or unfolded, there is small vestige of any such fire being extant in the inner-man of Scott.

Yet on the other hand, the surliest critic must allow that Scott was a genuine man, which itself is a great matter. No affectation, fantasticality, or distortion, dwelt in him; no shadow of cant. Nay withal, was he not a right brave and strong man, according to his kind? What a load of toil, what a measure of felicity, he quietly bore along with him; with what quiet strength he both worked on this earth, and en-

joyed in it; invincible to evil fortune and to good! A most composed invincible man; in difficulty and distress knowing no discouragement, Samson-like carrying off on his strong Samson-shoulders the gates that would imprison him; in danger and menace laughing at the whisper of fear. And then, with such a sunny current of true humour and humanity, a free joyful sympathy with so many things; what of fire he had all lying so beautifully *latent*, as radical latent heat, as fruitful internal warmth of life; a most robust, healthy man! The truth is, our best definition of Scott were perhaps even this, that he was, if no great man, then something much pleasanter to be, a robust, thoroughly healthy and withal very prosperous and victorious man. An eminently well-conditioned man, healthy in body, healthy in soul; we will call him one of the *healthiest* of men. Neither is this a small matter: health is a great matter, both to the possessor of it and to others. On the whole, that humorist in the Moral Essay was not so far out, who determined on honouring health only; and so instead of humbling himself to the highborn, to the rich and well-dressed, insisted on doffing hat to the healthy: coroneted carriages with pale faces in them passed by as failures, miserable and lamentable; trucks with ruddy-cheeked strength dragging at them were greeted as successful and venerable. For does not health mean harmony, the synonym of all that is true, justly-ordered, good; is it not, in some sense, the net total, as shown by experiment, of whatever worth is in us? The healthy man is a most meritorious product of Nature so far as he goes. A healthy body is good; but a soul in right health,—it is the thing beyond all others to be prayed for; the blessedest thing this earth receives of Heaven. Without artificial medicament of philosophy, or tight-lacing of creeds (always very questionable), the healthy soul discerns what is good, and adheres to it, and retains it; discerns what is bad, and spontaneously casts it off. An instinct from Nature herself, like that which guides the wild animals of the forest to their food, shows him what he shall do, what he shall abstain from. The false and foreign will not adhere to him; cant and all fantastic diseased incrustations are impossible;—

as Walker the *Original*, in such eminence of health was *he* for his part, *could* not, by much abstinence from soap-and-water, attain to a dirty face! This thing thou canst work with and profit by, this thing is substantial and worthy; that other thing thou canst not work with, it is trivial and inapt: so speaks unerringly the inward monition of the man's whole nature. No need of logic to prove the most argumentative absurdity absurd; as Goethe says of himself, 'all this ran down from me like water from a man in wax-cloth dress.' Blessed is the healthy nature; it is the coherent, sweetly co-operative, not incoherent, self-distracting, self-destructive one! In the harmonious adjustment and play of all the faculties, the just balance of oneself gives a just feeling towards all men and all things. Glad light from within radiates outwards, and enlightens and embellishes.

Now all this can be predicated of Walter Scott, and of no British literary man that we remember in these days, to any such extent,—if it be not perhaps of one, the most opposite imaginable to Scott, but his equal in this quality and what holds of it: William Cobbett! Nay, there are other similarities, widely different as they two look; nor be the comparison disparaging to Scott: for Cobbett also, as the pattern John Bull of his century, strong as the rhinoceros, and with singular humanities and genialities shining through his thick skin, is a most brave phenomenon. So bounteous was Nature to us; in the sickliest of recorded ages, when British Literature lay all puking and sprawling in Werterism, Byronism, and other Sentimentalism tearful or spasmodic (fruit of internal *wind*), Nature was kind enough to send us two healthy Men, of whom she might still say, not without pride, "These also were made in England; such limbs do I still make there!" It is one of the cheerfullest sights, let the question of its greatness be settled as you will. A healthy nature may or may not be great; but there is no great nature that is not healthy.

Or, on the whole, might we not say, Scott, in the new vesture of the nineteenth century, was intrinsically very much the old fighting Borderer of prior centuries; the kind of man

Nature did of old make in that birthland of his? In the saddle, with the foray-spear, he would have acquitted himself as he did at the desk with his pen. One fancies how, in stout *Beardie* of Harden's time, he could have played Beardie's part; and *been* the stalwart buff-belted *terræ filius* he in this late time could only delight to draw. The same stout self-help was in him; the same oak and triple brass round his heart. He too could have fought at Redswire, cracking crowns with the fiercest, if that had been the task; could have harried cattle in Tynedale, repaying injury with compound interest; a right sufficient captain of men. A man without qualms or fantasticalities; a hard-headed, sound-hearted man, of joyous robust temper, looking to the main chance, and fighting direct thitherward; *valde stalwartus homo!*—How much in that case had slumbered in him, and passed away without sign! But indeed, who knows how much slumbers in many men? Perhaps our greatest poets are the *mute* Miltons; the vocals are those whom by happy accident we lay hold of, one here, one there, as it chances, and *make* vocal. It is even a question, whether, had not want, discomfort and distress-warrants been busy at Stratford-on-Avon, Shakspeare himself had not lived killing calves or combing wool! Had the Edial Boarding-school turned out well, we had never heard of Samuel Johnson; Samuel Johnson had been a fat schoolmaster and dogmatic gerundgrinder, and never known that he was more. Nature is rich: those two eggs thou art eating carelessly to breakfast, could they not have been hatched into a pair of fowls, and have covered the whole world with poultry?

But it was not harrying of cattle in Tynedale, or cracking of crowns at Redswire, that this stout Border-chief was appointed to perform. Far other work. To be the song-singer and pleasant tale-teller to Britain and Europe, in the beginning of the artificial nineteenth century; here, and not there, lay his business. Beardie of Harden would have found it very amazing. How he shapes himself to this new element; how he helps himself along in it, makes it too do for him, lives sound and victorious in it, and leads over the marches such a spoil

as all the cattle-droves the Hardens ever took were poor in comparison to ; this is the history of the life and achievements of *our* Sir Walter Scott, Baronet ;—whereat we are now to glance for a little ! It is a thing remarkable ; a thing substantial ; of joyful, victorious sort ; not unworthy to be glanced at. Withal, however, a glance here and there will suffice. Our limits are narrow ; the thing, were it never so victorious, is not of the sublime sort, nor extremely edifying ; there is nothing in it to censure vehemently, nor love vehemently ; there is more to wonder at than admire ; and the whole secret is not an abstruse one.

Till towards the age of thirty, Scott's life has nothing in it decisively pointing towards Literature, or indeed towards distinction of any kind ; he is wedded, settled, and has gone through all his preliminary steps, without symptom of renown as yet. It is the life of every other Edinburgh youth of his station and time. Fortunate we must name it, in many ways. Parents in easy or wealthy circumstances, yet unencumbered with the cares and perversions of aristocracy ; nothing eminent in place, in faculty or culture, yet nothing deficient ; all around is methodic regulation, prudence, prosperity, kind-heartedness ; an element of warmth and light, of affection, industry and burgherly comfort, heightened into elegance ; in which the young heart can wholesomely grow. A vigorous health seems to have been given by Nature ; yet, as if Nature had said withal, "Let it be a health to express itself by mind, not by body," a lameness is added in childhood ; the brave little-boy, instead of romping and bickering, must learn to think ; or at lowest, what is a great matter, to sit still. No rackets and trundling-hoops for this young Walter ; but ballads, history-books and a world of legendary stuff, which his mother and those near him are copiously able to furnish. Disease, which is but superficial, and issues in outward lameness, does not cloud the young existence ; rather forwards it towards the expansion it is fitted for. The miserable disease had been one of the internal nobler parts, marring the general organization ; under which no Walter Scott could have

been forwarded, or with all his other endowments could have been producible or possible. 'Nature gives healthy children much; how much! Wise education is a wise unfolding of this; often it unfolds itself better of its own accord.'

Add one other circumstance: the place where; namely, Presbyterian Scotland. The influences of this are felt incessantly, they stream in at every pore. 'There is a country accent,' says La Rochefoucauld, 'not in speech only, but in thought, conduct, character and manner of existing, which never forsakes a man.' Scott, we believe, was all his days an Episcopalian Dissenter in Scotland; but that makes little to the matter. Nobody who knows Scotland and Scott can doubt but Presbyterianism too had a vast share in the forming of him. A country where the entire people is, or even once has been, laid hold of, filled to the heart with an infinite religious idea, has 'made a step from which it cannot retrograde.' Thought, conscience, the sense that man is denizen of a Universe, creature of an Eternity, has penetrated to the remotest cottage, to the simplest heart. Beautiful and awful, the feeling of a Heavenly Behest, of Duty god-commanded, over-canopies all life. There is an inspiration in such a people: one may say in a more special sense, 'the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.' Honour to all the brave and true; everlasting honour to brave old Knox, one of the truest of the true! That, in the moment while he and his cause, amid civil broils, in convulsion and confusion, were still but struggling for life, he sent the schoolmaster forth to all corners, and said, "Let the people be taught:" this is but one, and indeed an inevitable and comparatively inconsiderable item in his great message to men. His message, in its true compass, was, "Let men know that they are men; created by God, responsible to God; who work in any meanest moment of time what will last through eternity." It is verily a great message. Not ploughing and hammering machines, not patent-digesters (never so ornamental) to digest the produce of these: no, in no wise; born slaves neither of their fellow-men, nor of their own appetites; but men! This great message Knox did de-

liver, with a man's voice and strength; and found a people to believe him.

Of such an achievement, we say, were it to be made once only, the results are immense. Thought, in such a country, may change its form, but cannot go out; the country has attained *majority;* thought, and a certain spiritual manhood, ready for all work that man can do, endures there. It may take many forms: the form of hard-fisted money-getting industry, as in the vulgar Scotchman, in the vulgar New Englander; but as compact developed force and alertness of faculty, it is still there; it may utter itself, one day, as the colossal Scepticism of a Hume (beneficent this too though painful, wrestling Titan-like through doubt and inquiry towards new belief); and again, some better day, it may utter itself as the inspired Melody of a Burns: in a word, it is there, and continues to manifest itself, in the Voice and the Work of a Nation of hardy endeavouring considering men, with whatever that may bear in it, or unfold from it. The Scotch national character originates in many circumstances; first of all, in the Saxon stuff there was to work on; but next and beyond all else except that in the Presbyterian Gospel of John Knox. It seems a good national character; and, on some sides, not so good. Let Scott thank John Knox, for he owed him much, little as he dreamed of debt in that quarter! No Scotchman of his time was more entirely Scotch than Walter Scott: the good and the not so good, which all Scotchmen inherit, ran through every fibre of him.

Scott's childhood, school-days, college-days, are pleasant to read of, though they differ not from those of others in his place and time. The memory of him may probably enough last till this record of them become far more curious than it now is. "So lived an Edinburgh Writer to the Signet's son in the end of the eighteenth century," may some future Scotch novelist say to himself in the end of the twenty-first! The following little fragment of infancy is all we can extract. It is from an Autobiography which he had begun, which one cannot but regret he did not finish. Scott's best qualities never shone-out more freely than when he went upon anec-

dote and reminiscence. Such a master of narrative and of himself could have done personal narrative well. Here, if anywhere, his knowledge was complete, and all his humour and good-humour had free scope:

'An odd incident is worth recording. It seems, my mother had sent a maid to take charge of me, at this farm of Sandy-Knowe, that I might be no inconvenience to the family. But the damsel sent on that important mission had left her heart behind her, in the keeping of some wild fellow, it is likely, who had done and said more to her than he was like to make good. She became extremely desirous to return to Edinburgh; and, as my mother made a point of her remaining where she was, she contracted a sort of hatred at poor me, as the cause of her being detained at Sandy-Knowe. This rose, I suppose, to a sort of delirious affection; for she confessed to old Alison Wilson, the housekeeper, that she had carried me up to the craigs under a strong temptation of the Devil to cut my throat with her scissors, and bury me in the moss. Alison instantly took possession of my person, and took care that her confidant should not be subject to any farther temptation, at least so far as I was concerned. She was dismissed of course, and I have heard afterwards became a lunatic.

'It is here, at Sandy-Knowe, in the residence of my paternal grandfather, already mentioned, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies recurred to, to aid my lameness, some one had recommended that so often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family, I should be stripped, and swathed-up in the skin warm as it was flayed from the carcass of the animal. In this Tartar-like habiliment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlour in the farm-house, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl. I also distinctly remember the late Sir George M'Dougal of Mackerstown, father of the present Sir Henry Hay M'Dougal, joining in the attempt. He was, God knows how, a relation of ours; and I still recollect him, in his old-fashioned military habit (he had been Colonel of the Greys), with a small cocked-hat deeply laced, an embroidered scarlet waistcoat, and a light-coloured coat, with milk-white locks tied in a military fashion, kneeling on the ground before me, and dragging his watch along the carpet

to induce me to follow it. The benevolent old soldier, and the infant wrapped in his sheepskin, would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators. This must have happened about my third year (1774), for Sir George M'Dougal and my grandfather both died shortly after that period.'[1]

We will glance next into the '*Liddesdale Raids*.' Scott has grown-up to be a brisk-hearted jovial young man and Advocate: in vacation-time he makes excursions to the Highlands, to the Border Cheviots and Northumberland; rides free and far, on his stout galloway, through bog and brake, over the dim moory Debatable Land,—over Flodden and other fields and places, where, though he yet knew it not, his work lay. No land, however dim and moory, but either has had or will have its poet, and so become not unknown in song. Liddesdale, which was once as prosaic as most dales, having now attained illustration, let us glance thitherward: Liddesdale too is on this ancient Earth of ours, under this eternal Sky; and gives and takes, in the most incalculable manner, with the Universe at large! Scott's experiences there are rather of the rustic Arcadian sort; the element of whisky not wanting. We should premise that here and there a feature has, perhaps, been aggravated for effect's sake:

'During seven successive years,' writes Mr. Lockhart (for the Autobiography has long since left us), 'Scott made a *raid*, as he called it, into Liddesdale with Mr. Shortreed, sheriff-substitute of Roxburgh, for his guide; exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined *peel* from foundation to battlement. At this time no wheeled carriage had ever been seen in the district;—the first, indeed, was a gig, driven by Scott himself for a part of his way, when on the last of these seven excursions. There was no inn nor public-house of any kind in the whole valley; the travellers passed from the shepherd's hut to the minister's manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead; gathering, wherever they went, songs and tunes, and occasionally more tangible relics of antiquity,—even such a "rowth of auld knick-nackets" as Burns ascribes

[1] Vol. i. pp. 15–17.

to Captain Grose. To these rambles Scott owed much of the materials of his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border;* and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of these unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of one of the most charming of his prose works. But how soon he had any definite object before him in his researches, seems very doubtful. "He was *makin' himsell* a' the time," said Mr. Shortreed; "but he didna ken maybe what he was about till years had passed: at first he thought o' little, I daresay, but the queerness and the fun."

'"In those days," says the Memorandum before me, "advocates were not so plenty—at least about Liddesdale;" and the worthy Sheriff-substitute goes on to describe the sort of bustle, not unmixed with alarm, produced at the first farmhouse they visited (Willie Elliot's at Milburnholm), when the honest man was informed of the quality of one of his guests. When they dismounted, accordingly, he received Mr. Scott with great ceremony, and insisted upon himself leading his horse to the stable. Shortreed accompanied Willie, however; and the latter, after taking a deliberate peep at Scott, "out-by the edge of the door-cheek," whispered, "Weel, Robin, I say, de'il hae me if I's be a bit feared for him now; he's just a chield like ourselves, I think." Half-a-dozen dogs of all degrees had already gathered round "the advocate," and his way of returning their compliments had set Willie Elliot at once at his ease.

'According to Mr. Shortreed, this good man of Milburnholm was the great original of Dandie Dinmont.' * * *

'They dined at Milburnholm; and, after having lingered over Willie Elliot's punch-bowl, until, in Mr. Shortreed's phrase, they were "half-glowrin," mounted their steeds again, and proceeded to Dr. Elliot's at Cleugh-head, where ("for," says my Memorandum, "folk werena very nice in those days") the two travellers slept in one and the same bed,—as, indeed, seems to have been the case with them throughout most of their excursions in this primitive district. Dr. Elliot (a clergyman) had already a large Ms. collection of the ballads Scott was in quest of.' * * * 'Next morning they seem to have ridden a long way for the express purpose of visiting one "auld Thomas o' Tuzzilehope," another Elliot, I suppose, who was celebrated for his skill on the Border pipe, and in particular for being in possession of the real *lilt*[1] of *Dick o' the Cow.*

[1] Loud tune: German, *lallen.*

Before starting, that is, at six o'clock, the ballad-hunters had, "just to lay the stomach, a devilled duck or twae, and some *London* porter." Auld Thomas found them, nevertheless, well disposed for "breakfast" on their arrival at Tuzzilehope; and this being over, he delighted them with one of the most hideous and unearthly of all specimens of "riding music," and, moreover, with considerable libations of whisky-punch, manufactured in a certain wooden vessel, resembling a very small milkpail, which he called "Wisdom," because it "made" only a few spoonsful of spirits,—though he had the art of replenishing it so adroitly, that it had been celebrated for fifty years as more fatal to sobriety than any bowl in the parish. Having done due honour to "Wisdom," they again mounted, and proceeded over moss and moor to some other equally hospitable master of the pipe. "Ah me," says Shortreed, "sic an endless fund o' humour and drollery as he then had wi' him! Never ten yards but we were either laughing or roaring and singing. Wherever we stopped, how brawlie he suited himsell to everybody! He aye did as the lave did; never made himsell the great man, or took ony airs in the company. I've seen him in a' moods in these jaunts, grave and gay, daft and serious, sober and drunk—(this, however, even in our wildest rambles, was rare)—but, drunk or sober, he was aye the gentleman. He lookit excessively heavy and stupid when he was *fou*, but he was never out o' gude-humour."'

These are questionable doings, questionably narrated; but what shall we say of the following, wherein the element of whisky plays an extremely prominent part? We will say that it *is* questionable, and not exemplary, whisky mounting clearly beyond its level; that indeed charity hopes and conjectures, here may be some aggravating of features for effect's sake!

'On reaching, one evening, some *Charlieshope* or other (I forget the name) among those wildernesses, they found a kindly reception, as usual; but, to their agreeable surprise after some days of hard living, a measured and orderly hospitality as respected liquor. Soon after supper, at which a bottle of elderberry wine alone had been produced, a young student of divinity, who happened to be in the house, was called upon to take the "big ha' Bible," in the good old fashion of "Burns's

Saturday Night;" and some progress had been already made in the service, when the good-man of the farm, whose "tendency," as Mr. Mitchell says, "was soporific," scandalised his wife and the dominie by starting suddenly from his knees, and, rubbing his eyes, with a stentorian exclamation of "By ——, here's the keg at last!" and in tumbled, as he spoke the word, a couple of sturdy herdsmen, whom, on hearing a day before of the advocate's approaching visit, he had despatched to a certain smuggler's haunt, at some considerable distance, in quest of a supply of *run* brandy from the Solway Frith. The pious "exercise" of the household was hopelessly interrupted. With a thousand apologies for his hitherto shabby entertainment, this jolly Elliot, or Armstrong, had the welcome *keg* mounted on the table without a moment's delay, and gentle and simple, not forgetting the dominie, continued carousing about it until daylight streamed-in upon the party. Sir Walter Scott seldom failed, when I saw him in company with his Liddesdale companion, to mimic with infinite humour the sudden outburst of his old host on hearing the clatter of horses' feet, which he knew to indicate the arrival of the keg—the consternation of the dame—and the rueful despair with which the young clergyman closed the book.'[1]

From which Liddesdale *raids*, which we here, like the young clergyman, close not without a certain rueful despair, let the reader draw what nourishment he can. They evince satisfactorily, though in a rude manner, that in those days young advocates, and Scott like the rest of them, were *alive* and alert,—whisky sometimes preponderating. But let us now fancy that the jovial young Advocate has pleaded his first cause; has served in yeomanry drills; been wedded, been promoted Sheriff, without romance in either case; dabbling a little the while, under guidance of Monk Lewis, in translations from the German, in translation of Goethe's *Götz with the Iron Hand;*—and we have arrived at the threshold of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and the opening of a new century.

Hitherto, therefore, there has been made out, by Nature and Circumstance working together, nothing unusually remarkable, yet still something very valuable; a stout effectual

[1] Vol. i. pp. 195–199.

man of thirty, full of broad sagacity and good humour, with faculties in him fit for any burden of business, hospitality and duty, legal or civic :—with what other faculties in him no one could yet say. As indeed, who, after lifelong inspection, can say what is in any man? The uttered part of a man's life, let us always repeat, bears to the unuttered, unconscious part a small unknown proportion ; he himself never knows it, much less do others. Give him room, give him *impulse ;* he reaches down to the Infinite with that so straitly-imprisoned soul of his ; and *can* do miracles if need be! It is one of the comfortablest truths that great men abound, though in the unknown state. Nay, as above hinted, our greatest, being also by nature our *quietest*, are perhaps those that remain unknown! Philosopher Fichte took comfort in this belief, when from all pulpits and editorial desks, and publications periodical and stationary, he could hear nothing but the infinite chattering and twittering of commonplace become ambitious ; and in the infinite stir of motion nowhither, and of din which should have been silence, all seemed churned into one tempestuous yesty froth, and the stern Fichte almost desired 'taxes on knowledge' to allay it a little ;—he comforted himself, we say, by the unshaken belief that Thought did still exist in Germany ; that thinking men, each in his own corner, were verily doing their work, though in a silent latent manner.[1] Walter Scott, as a latent Walter, had never amused all men for a score of years in the course of centuries and eternities, or gained and lost several hundred thousand pounds sterling by Literature ; but he might have been a happy and by no means a useless,—nay, who knows at bottom whether not a still usefuller Walter! However, that was not his fortune. The Genius of rather a singular age,—an age at once destitute of faith and terrified at scepticism, with little knowledge of its whereabout, with many sorrows to bear or front, and on the whole with a life to lead in these new circumstances,—had said to himself : What man shall be the temporary comforter, or were it but the spiritual comfit-maker, of this my poor singular age, to solace its dead tedium and manifold sorrows a little? So had the Genius said,

[1] Fichte, *Ueber das Wesen des Gelehrten.*

looking over all the world, What man? and found him walking the dusty Outer Parliament-house of Edinburgh, with his advocate-gown on his back; and exclaimed, That is he!

The *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* proved to be a well, from which flowed one of the broadest rivers. Metrical Romances (which in due time pass into Prose Romances); the old life of men resuscitated for us: it is a mighty word! Not as dead tradition, but as a palpable presence, the past stood before us. There they were, the rugged old fighting men; in their doughty simplicity and strength, with their heartiness, their healthiness, their stout self-help, in their iron basnets, leather jerkins, jack-boots, in their quaintness of manner and costume; there as they looked and lived: it was like a new discovered continent in Literature; for the new century, a bright El Dorado,—or else some fat beatific land of Cockaigne, and Paradise of Donothings. To the opening nineteenth century, in its languor and paralysis, nothing could have been welcomer. Most unexpected, most refreshing and exhilarating; behold our new El Dorado; our fat beatific Lubberland, where one can enjoy and do nothing! It was the time for such a new Literature; and this Walter Scott was the man for it. The *Lays*, the *Marmions*, the *Ladys* and *Lords* of Lake and Isles, followed in quick succession, with ever-widening profit and praise. How many thousands of guineas were paid-down for each new Lay; how many thousands of copies (fifty and more sometimes) were printed off, then and subsequently; what complimenting, reviewing, renown and apotheosis there was: all is recorded in these Seven Volumes, which will be valuable in literary statistics. It is a history, brilliant, remarkable; the outlines of which are known to all. The reader shall recall it, or conceive it. No blaze in his fancy is likely to mount higher than the reality did.

At this middle period of his life, therefore, Scott, enriched with copyrights, with new official incomes and promotions, rich in money, rich in repute, presents himself as a man in the full career of success. 'Health, wealth, and wit to guide them' (as his vernacular Proverb says), all these three are

his. The field is open for him, and victory there; his own faculty, his own self, unshackled, victoriously unfolds itself,—the highest blessedness that can befall a man. Wide circle of friends, personal loving admirers; warmth of domestic joys, vouchsafed to all that can true-heartedly nestle-down among them; light of radiance and renown given only to a few: who would not call Scott happy? But the happiest circumstance of all is, as we said above, that Scott had in himself a right healthy soul, rendering him little dependent on outward circumstances. Things showed themselves to him not in distortion or borrowed light or gloom, but as they were. Endeavour lay in him and endurance, in due measure; and clear vision of what was to be endeavoured after. Were one to preach a Sermon on Health, as really were worth doing, Scott ought to be the text. Theories are demonstrably true in the way of logic; and then in the way of practice they prove true or else not true: but here is the grand experiment, Do they turn-out well? What boots it that a man's creed is the wisest, that his system of principles is the superfinest, if, when set to work, the life of him does nothing but jar, and fret itself into *holes?* They are untrue in that, were it in nothing else, these principles of his; openly convicted of untruth;—fit only, shall we say, to be rejected as counterfeits, and flung to the dogs? We say not that; but we do say, that ill-health, of body or of mind, is *defeat*, is battle (in a good or in a bad cause) with bad success; that health alone is victory. Let all men, if they can manage it, contrive to be healthy! He who in what cause soever sinks into pain and disease, let him take thought of it; let him know well that it is not good *he* has arrived at yet, but surely evil,—may, or may not be, on the way towards good.

Scott's healthiness showed itself decisively in all things, and nowhere more decisively than in this: the way in which he took his fame; the estimate he from the first formed of fame. Money will buy money's worth; but the thing men call fame, what is it? A gaudy emblazonry, not good for much,—except, indeed, as it too may turn to money. To

Scott it was a profitable pleasing superfluity, no necessary of life. Not necessary, now or ever! Seemingly without much effort, but taught by Nature, and the instinct which instructs the sound heart what is good for it and what is not, he felt that he could always do without this same emblazonry of reputation; that he ought to put no trust in it; but be ready at any time to see it pass away from him, and to hold on his way as before. It is incalculable, as we conjecture, what evil he escaped in this manner; what perversions, irritations, mean agonies without a name, he lived wholly apart from, knew nothing of. Happily before fame arrived, he had reached the mature age at which all this was easier to him. What a strange Nemesis lurks in the felicities of men! In thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey, in thy belly it shall be bitter as gall! Some weakly-organised individual, we will say at the age of five-and-twenty, whose main or whole talent rests on some prurient susceptivity, and nothing under it but shallowness and vacuum, is clutched hold of by the general imagination, is whirled aloft to the giddy height; and taught to believe the divine-seeming message that he is a great man: such individual seems the luckiest of men: and, alas, is he not the unluckiest? Swallow not the Circe-draught, O weakly-organised individual; it is fell poison; it will dry-up the fountains of thy whole existence, and all will grow withered and parched; thou shalt be wretched under the sun! Is there, for example, a sadder book than that *Life of Byron*, by Moore? To omit mere prurient susceptivities that rest on vacuum, look at poor Byron, who really had much substance in him. Sitting there in his self-exile, with a proud heart striving to persuade itself that it despises the entire created Universe; and far off, in foggy Babylon, let any pitifullest whipster draw pen on him, your proud Byron writhes in torture,—as if the pitiful whipster were a magician, or his pen a galvanic wire struck into the Byron's spinal marrow! Lamentable, despicable,—one had rather be a kitten and cry mew! O son of Adam, great or little, according as thou art lovable, those thou livest with will love thee. Those thou livest *not* with, is it of moment that they have the alphabetic letters of

thy name engraved on their memory, with some signpost likeness of thee (as like as I to Hercules) appended to them? It is not of moment; in sober truth, not of any moment at all! And yet, behold, there is no soul now whom thou canst love freely,—from *one* soul only art thou always sure of reverence enough; in presence of no soul is it rightly well with thee! How is thy world become desert; and thou, for the sake of a little babblement of tongues, art poor, bankrupt, insolvent not in purse, but in heart and mind. 'The Golden Calf of self-love,' says Jean Paul, 'has grown into a burning Phalaris' Bull, to consume its owner and worshipper.' Ambition, the desire of shining and outshining, was the beginning of Sin in this world. The man of letters who founds upon his fame, does he not thereby alone declare himself a follower of Lucifer (named *Satan*, the Enemy), and member of the Satanic school?——

It was in this poetic period that Scott formed his connexion with the Ballantynes; and embarked, though under cover, largely in trade. To those who regard him in the heroic light, and will have *Vates* to signify Prophet as well as Poet, this portion of his biography seems somewhat incongruous. Viewed as it stood in the reality, as he was and as it was, the enterprise, since it proved so unfortunate, may be called lamentable, but cannot be called unnatural. The practical Scott, looking towards practical issues in all things, could not but find hard cash one of the most practical. If by any means cash could be honestly produced, were it by writing poems, were it by printing them, why not? Great things might be done ultimately; great difficulties were at once got rid of,—manifold higglings of booksellers, and contradictions of sinners hereby fell away. A printing and bookselling speculation was not so alien for a maker of books. Voltaire, who indeed got no copyrights, made much money by the war-commissariat, in his time; we believe, by the victualling branch of it. St. George himself, they say, was a dealer in bacon in Cappadocia. A thrifty man will help himself towards his object by such steps as lead to it. Station in society, solid power over the good things of this world, was Scott's avowed

object; towards which the precept of precepts is that of Iago, *Put money in thy purse.*

Here, indeed, it is to be remarked, that perhaps no literary man of any generation has less value than Scott for the immaterial part of his mission in any sense: not only for the fantasy called fame, with the fantastic miseries attendant thereon; but also for the spiritual purport of his work, whether it tended hitherward or thitherward, or had any tendency whatever; and indeed for all purports and results of his working, except such, we may say, as offered themselves to the eye, and could, in one sense or the other, be handled, looked at and buttoned into the breeches-pocket. Somewhat too little of a fantast, this *Vates* of ours! But so it was: in this nineteenth century, our highest literary man, who immeasurably beyond all others commanded the world's ear, had, as it were, no message whatever to deliver to the world; wished not the world to elevate itself, to amend itself, to do this or to do that, except simply pay him for the books he kept writing. Very remarkable; fittest, perhaps, for an age fallen languid, destitute of faith and terrified at scepticism? Or, perhaps, for quite another sort of age, an age all in peaceable triumphant motion? Be this as it may, surely since Shakspeare's time there has been no great speaker so unconscious of an aim in speaking as Walter Scott. Equally unconscious these two utterances; equally the sincere complete products of the minds they came from: and now if they were equally *deep?* Or, if the one was living fire, and the other was futile phosphorescence and mere resinous firework? It will depend on the relative worth of the minds; for both were equally spontaneous, both equally expressed themselves unencumbered by an ulterior aim. Beyond drawing audiences to the Globe Theatre, Shakspeare contemplated no result in those plays of his. Yet they have had results! Utter with free heart what thy own *dæmon* gives thee: if fire from heaven, it shall be well; if resinous firework, it shall be—as well as it could be, or better than otherwise! The candid judge will, in general, require that a speaker, in so extremely serious a Universe as this of ours, have something to speak

about. In the heart of the speaker there ought to be some kind of gospel-tidings, burning till it be uttered; otherwise it were better for him that he altogether held his peace. A gospel somewhat more decisive than this of Scott's,—except to an age altogether languid, without either scepticism or faith! These things the candid judge will demand of literary men; yet withal will recognise the great worth there is in Scott's honesty if in nothing more, in his being the thing he was with such entire good faith. Here is a something, not a nothing. If no skyborn messenger, heaven looking through his eyes; then neither is it a chimera with his systems, crotchets, cants, fanaticisms, and 'last infirmity of noble minds,'—full of misery, unrest and ill-will; but a substantial, peaceable, terrestrial man. Far as the Earth is under the Heaven does Scott stand below the former sort of character; but high as the cheerful flowery Earth is above waste Tartarus does he stand above the latter. Let him live in his own fashion, and do honour to him in that.

It were late in the day to write criticisms on those Metrical Romances: at the same time, we may remark, the great popularity they had seems natural enough. In the first place, there was the indisputable impress of worth, of genuine human force, in them. This, which lies in some degree, or is thought to lie, at the bottom of all popularity, did to an unusual degree disclose itself in these rhymed romances of Scott's. Pictures were actually painted and presented; human emotions conceived and sympathised with. Considering what wretched Della-Cruscan and other vamping-up of old worn-out tatters was the staple article then, it may be granted that Scott's excellence was superior and supreme. When a Hayley was the main singer, a Scott might well be hailed with warm welcome. Consider whether the *Loves of the Plants*, and even the *Loves of the Triangles*, could be worth the loves and hates of men and women! Scott was as preferable to what he displaced, as the substance is to wearisomely repeated shadow of a substance. But, in the second place, we may say that the *kind* of worth which Scott manifested was fitted especially for the then temper of men. We have called it an

age fallen into spiritual languor, destitute of belief, yet terrified at scepticism; reduced to live a stinted half-life, under strange new circumstances. Now vigorous whole-life, this was what of all things these delineations offered. The reader was carried back to rough strong times, wherein those maladies of ours had not yet arisen. Brawny fighters, all cased in buff and iron, their hearts too sheathed in oak and triple brass, caprioled their huge war-horses, shook their death-doing spears; and went forth in the most determined manner, nothing doubting. The reader sighed, yet not without a reflex solacement: "Oh, that I too had lived in those times, had never known these logic-cobwebs, this doubt, this sickliness; and been and felt myself alive among men alive!" Add lastly, that in this new-found poetic world there was no call for effort on the reader's part; what excellence they had, exhibited itself at a glance. It was for the reader, not the El Dorado only, but a beatific land of Cockaigne and Paradise of Do-nothings! The reader, what the vast majority of readers so long to do, was allowed to lie down at his ease, and be ministered to. What the Turkish bathkeeper is said to aim at with his frictions, and shampooings, and fomentings, more or less effectually, that the patient in total idleness may have the delights of activity,—was here to a considerable extent realised. The languid imagination fell back into its rest; an artist was there who could supply it with high-painted scenes, with sequences of stirring action, and whisper to it, Be at ease, and let thy tepid element be comfortable to thee. 'The rude man,' says a critic, 'requires only to see something going on. The man of more refinement must be made to feel. The man of complete refinement must be made to reflect.'

We named the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* the fountain from which flowed this great river of Metrical Romances; but according to some they can be traced to a still higher, obscurer spring; to Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen with the Iron Hand;* of which, as we have seen, Scott in his earlier days executed a translation. Dated a good many years ago, the following words in a criticism on Goethe are found written; which probably are still new to most readers of this Review:

'The works just mentioned, *Götz* and *Werter*, though noble specimens of youthful talent, are still not so much distinguished by their intrinsic merits as by their splendid fortune. It would be difficult to name two books which have exercised a deeper influence on the subsequent literature of Europe than these two performances of a young author; his first-fruits, the produce of his twenty-fourth year. *Werter* appeared to seize the hearts of men in all quarters of the world, and to utter for them the word which they had long been waiting to hear. As usually happens too, this same word, once uttered, was soon abundantly repeated; spoken in all dialects, and chanted through all notes of the gamut, till the sound of it had grown a weariness rather than a pleasure. Sceptical sentimentality, view-hunting, love, friendship, suicide and desperation, became the staple of literary ware; and though the epidemic, after a long course of years, subsided in Germany, it reappeared with various modifications in other countries, and everywhere abundant traces of its good and bad effects are still to be discerned. The fortune of *Berlichingen with the Iron Hand*, though less sudden, was by no means less exalted. In his own country, *Götz*, though he now stands solitary and childless, became the parent of an innumerable progeny of chivalry plays, feudal delineations, and poetico-antiquarian performances; which, though long ago deceased, made noise enough in their day and generation: and with ourselves his influence has been perhaps still more remarkable. Sir Walter Scott's first literary enterprise was a translation of *Götz von Berlichingen:* and, if genius could be communicated like instruction, we might call this work of Goethe's the prime cause of *Marmion* and the *Lady of the Lake*, with all that has followed from the same creative hand. Truly, a grain of seed that has lighted in the right soil! For if not firmer and fairer, it has grown to be taller and broader than any other tree; and all the nations of the earth are still yearly gathering of its fruit.'

How far *Götz von Berlichingen* actually affected Scott's literary destination, and whether without it the rhymed romances, and then the prose romances of the Author of Waverley, would not have followed as they did, must remain a very obscure question; obscure, and not important. Of the fact, however, there is no doubt, that these two tendencies, which may be named *Götzism* and *Werterism*, of the

former of which Scott was representative with us, have made, and are still in some quarters making the tour of all Europe. In Germany too there was this affectionate half-regretful looking-back into the Past; Germany had its buff-belted watch-tower period in literature, and had even got done with it, before Scott began. Then as to *Werterism*, had not we English our Byron and his genus? No form of Werterism in any other country had half the potency; as our Scott carried Chivalry Literature to the ends of the world, so did our Byron Werterism. France, busy with its Revolution and Napoleon, had little leisure at the moment for Götzism or Werterism; but it has had them both since, in a shape of its own: witness the whole 'Literature of Desperation' in our own days; the beggarliest form of Werterism yet seen, probably its expiring final form: witness also, at the other extremity of the scale, a noble-gifted Chateaubriand, Götz and Werter both in one.—Curious, how all Europe is but like a set of parishes of the same county; participant of the self-same influences, ever since the Crusades, and earlier;—and these glorious wars of ours are but like parish-brawls, which begin in mutual ignorance, intoxication and boastful speech; which end in broken windows, damage, waste and bloody noses; and which one hopes the general good sense is now in the way towards putting down, in some measure!

But leaving this to be as it can, what it concerned us here to remark, was that British Werterism, in the shape of those Byron Poems, so potent and poignant, produced on the languid appetite of men a mighty effect. This too was a 'class of feelings deeply important to modern minds; feelings which arise from *passion incapable of being converted into action*, which belong to an age as indolent, cultivated and unbelieving as our own!' The 'languid age without either faith or scepticism' turned towards Byronism with an interest altogether peculiar: here, if no cure for its miserable paralysis and languor, was at least an indignant statement of the misery; an indignant Ernulphus' curse read over it,—which all men felt to be something. Half-regretful lookings into the Past gave place, in many quarters, to Ernulphus' cursings of the Present.

Scott was among the first to perceive that the day of Metrical Chivalry Romances was declining. He had held the sovereignty for some half-score of years, a comparatively long lease of it; and now the time seemed come for dethronement, for abdication: an unpleasant business; which however he held himself ready, as a brave man will, to transact with composure and in silence. After all, Poetry was not his staff of life; Poetry had already yielded him much money; *this* at least it would not take back from him. Busy always with editing, with compiling, with multiplex official commercial business, and solid interests, he beheld the coming change with unmoved eye.

Resignation he was prepared to exhibit in this matter;—and now behold there proved to be no need of resignation. Let the Metrical Romance become a Prose one; shake off its rhyme-fetters, and try a wider sweep! In the spring of 1814 appeared *Waverley;* an event memorable in the annals of British Literature; in the annals of British Bookselling thrice and four times memorable. Byron sang, but Scott narrated; and when the song had sung itself out through all variations onwards to the *Don Juan* one, Scott was still found narrating, and carrying the whole world along with him. All bygone popularity of chivalry-lays was swallowed up in a far greater. What 'series' followed out of *Waverley*, and how and with what result, is known to all men; was witnessed and watched with a kind of rapt astonishment by all. Hardly any literary reputation ever rose so high in our Island; no reputation at all ever spread so wide. Walter Scott became Sir Walter Scott, Baronet, of Abbotsford; on whom Fortune seemed to pour her whole cornucopia of wealth, honour and worldly good; the favourite of Princes and of Peasants, and all intermediate men. His 'Waverley series,' swift-following one on the other apparently without end, was the universal reading; looked for like an annual harvest, by all ranks, in all European countries. A curious circumstance superadded itself, that the author though known was unknown. From the first, most people suspected, and soon after the first, few intelligent persons much doubted, that the Author of *Waverley* was Walter Scott. Yet a certain mystery was still kept up; rather piquant

to the public; doubtless very pleasant to the author, who saw it all; who probably had not to listen, as other hapless individuals often had, to this or the other long-drawn 'clear proof at last,' that the author was not Walter Scott, but a certain astonishing Mr. So-and-so;—one of the standing miseries of human life in that time. But for the privileged Author, it was like a king travelling incognito. All men know that he is a high king, chivalrous Gustaf or Kaiser Joseph; but he mingles in their meetings without cumber of etiquette or lonesome ceremony, as Chevalier du Nord, or Count of Lorraine: he has none of the weariness of royalty, and yet all the praise, and the satisfaction of hearing it with his own ears. In a word, the Waverley Novels circulated and reigned triumphant; to the general imagination the 'Author of *Waverley*' was like some living mythological personage, and ranked among the chief wonders of the world.

How a man lived and demeaned himself in such unwonted circumstances, is worth seeing. We would gladly quote from Scott's correspondence of this period; but that does not much illustrate the matter. His letters, as above stated, are never without interest, yet also seldom or never very interesting. They are full of cheerfulness, of wit and ingenuity; but they do not treat of aught intimate; without impeaching their sincerity, what is called sincerity, one may say they do not, in any case whatever, proceed from the innermost parts of the mind. Conventional forms, due consideration of your own and your correspondent's pretensions and vanities, are at no moment left out of view. The epistolary stream runs on, lucid, free, glad-flowing; but always, as it were, *parallel* to the real substance of the matter, never coincident with it. One feels it hollowish under foot. Letters they are of a most humane man of the world, even exemplary in that kind; but with the man of the world always visible in them;—as indeed it was little in Scott's way to speak, perhaps even with himself, in any other fashion. We select rather some glimpses of him from Mr. Lockhart's record. The first is of dining with Royalty or Prince-Regentship itself; an almost official matter:

'On hearing from Mr. Croker (then Secretary to the Admiralty) that Scott was to be in town by the middle of March (1815), the Prince said, "Let me know when he comes, and I'll get-up a snug little dinner that will suit him;" and, after he had been presented and graciously received at the *levee*, he was invited to dinner accordingly, through his excellent friend Mr. Adam (now Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court in Scotland), who at that time held a confidential office in the royal household. The Regent had consulted with Mr. Adam, also, as to the composition of the party. "Let us have," said he, "just a few friends of his own, and the more Scotch the better;" and both the Commissioner and Mr. Croker assure me that the party was the most interesting and agreeable one in their recollection. It comprised, I believe, the Duke of York—the Duke of Gordon (then Marquess of Huntly)—the Marquess of Hertford (then Lord Yarmouth)—the Earl of Fife—and Scott's early friend, Lord Melville. "The Prince and Scott," says Mr. Croker, "were the two most brilliant story-tellers, in their several ways, that I have ever happened to meet; they were both aware of their *forte*, and both exerted themselves that evening with delightful effect. On going home, I really could not decide which of them had shone the most. The Regent was enchanted with Scott, as Scott with him; and on all his subsequent visits to London, he was a frequent guest at the royal table." The Lord Chief Commissioner remembers that the Prince was particularly delighted with the poet's anecdotes of the old Scotch judges and lawyers, which his Royal Highness sometimes *capped* by ludicrous traits of certain ermined sages of his own acquaintance. Scott told, among others, a story, which he was fond of telling, of his old friend the Lord Justice-Clerk Braxfield; and the commentary of his Royal Highness on hearing it amused Scott, who often mentioned it afterwards. The anecdote is this: Braxfield, whenever he went on a particular circuit, was in the habit of visiting a gentleman of good fortune in the neighbourhood of one of the assize towns, and staying at least one night, which, being both of them ardent chess-players, they usually concluded with their favourite game. One Spring circuit the battle was not decided at daybreak; so the Justice-Clerk said, "Weel, Donald, I must e'en come back this gate, and let the game lie ower for the present:" and back he came in October, but not to his old friend's hospitable house; for that gentleman had in the in-

terim been apprehended on a capital charge (of forgery), and his name stood on the *Porteous Roll*, or list of those who were about to be tried under his former guest's auspices. The laird was indicted and tried accordingly, and the jury returned a verdict of *guilty*. Braxfield forthwith put on his cocked hat (which answers to the black cap in England), and pronounced the sentence of the law in the usual terms—"To be hanged by the neck until you be dead; and may the Lord have mercy upon your unhappy soul!" Having concluded this awful formula in his most sonorous cadence, Braxfield, dismounting his formidable beaver, gave a familiar nod to his unfortunate acquaintance, and said to him in a sort of chuckling whisper—"And now, Donald, my man, I think I've checkmated you for ance." The Regent laughed heartily at this specimen of Macqueen's brutal humour; and "I'faith, Walter," said he, "this old big-wig seems to have taken things as coolly as my tyrannical self. Don't you remember Tom Moore's description of me at breakfast—

> "'The table spread with tea and toast,
> Death-warrants and the Morning Post?'"

'Towards midnight, the Prince called for "a bumper, with all the honours, to the Author of Waverley;" and looked significantly, as he was charging his own glass, to Scott. Scott seemed somewhat puzzled for a moment, but instantly recovering himself, and filling his glass to the brim, said, "Your Royal Highness looks as if you thought I had some claim to the honours of this toast. I have no such pretensions; but shall take good care that the real Simon Pure hears of the high compliment that has now been paid him." He then drank off his claret; and joined with a stentorian voice in the cheering, which the Prince himself timed. But before the company could resume their seats, his Royal Highness, "Another of the same, if you please, to the Author of Marmion,—and now, Walter, my man, I have checkmated you for *ance*." The second bumper was followed by cheers still more prolonged: and Scott then rose, and returned thanks in a short address, which struck the Lord Chief Commissioner as "alike grave and graceful." This story has been circulated in a very perverted shape.' * * * 'Before he left town he again dined at Carlton House, when the party was a still smaller one than before, and the merriment if possible still more free. That

nothing might be wanting, the Prince sang several capital songs.'[1]

Or take, at a very great interval in many senses, this glimpse of another dinner, altogether *un*officially and much better described. It is James Ballantyne the printer and publisher's dinner, in Saint John Street, Canongate, Edinburgh, on the birtheve of a Waverley Novel:

'The feast was, to use one of James's own favourite epithets, *gorgeous*, an aldermanic display of turtle and venison, with the suitable accompaniments of iced punch, potent ale, and generous Madeira. When the cloth was drawn, the burly præses arose, with all he could muster of the port of John Kemble, and spouted with a sonorous voice the formula of Macbeth,

"Fill full!
I drink to the general joy of the whole table!"

This was followed by "the King, God bless him!" and second came—"Gentlemen, there is another toast which never has been nor shall be omitted in this house of mine: I give you the health of Mr. Walter Scott, with three times three!" All honour having been done to this health, and Scott having briefly thanked the company, with some expressions of warm affection to their host, Mrs. Ballantyne retired;—the bottles passed round twice or thrice in the usual way; and then James rose once more, every vein on his brow distended; his eyes solemnly fixed on vacancy, to propose, not as before in his stentorian key, but with "'bated breath," in the sort of whisper by which a stage-conspirator thrills the gallery,—"*Gentlemen, a bumper to the immortal Author of Waverley!*"—The uproar of cheering, in which Scott made a fashion of joining, was succeeded by deep silence; and then Ballantyne proceeded—

"In his Lord-Burleigh look, serene and serious,
A something of imposing and mysterious"—

to lament the obscurity, in which his illustrious but too modest correspondent still chose to conceal himself from the plaudits of the world; to thank the company for the manner in

[1] Vol. iii. pp. 340–343.

which the *nominis umbra* had been received; and to assure them that the Author of Waverley would, when informed of the circumstance, feel highly delighted—"the proudest hour of his life," &c. &c. The cool, demure fun of Scott's features during all this mummery was perfect; and Erskine's attempt at a gay *nonchalance* was still more ludicrously meritorious. Aldiborontiphoscophornio, however, bursting as he was, knew too well to allow the new Novel to be made the subject of discussion. Its name was announced, and success to it crowned another cup; but after that, no more of Jedediah. To cut the thread, he rolled out unbidden some one of his many theatrical songs, in a style that would have done no dishonour to almost any orchestra—*The Maid of Lodi*, or perhaps *The Bay of Biscay O!*—or *The sweet little cherub that sits up aloft.* Other toasts followed, interspersed with ditties from other performers; old George Thomson, the friend of Burns, was ready, for one, with *The Moorland Wedding*, or *Willie brew'd a peck o' maut*;—and so it went on, until Scott and Erskine, with any clerical or very staid personage that had chanced to be admitted, saw fit to withdraw. Then the scene was changed. The claret and olives made way for broiled bones and a mighty bowl of punch; and when a few glasses of the hot beverage had restored his powers, James opened *ore rotundo* on the merits of the forthcoming Romance. "One chapter—one chapter only!" was the cry. After "*Nay, by'r Lady, nay!*" and a few more coy shifts, the proof-sheets were at length produced, and James, with many a prefatory hem read aloud what he considered as the most striking dialogue they contained.

'The first I heard so read was the interview between Jeanie Deans, the Duke of Argyle and Queen Caroline, in Richmond Park; and, notwithstanding some spice of the pompous tricks to which he was addicted, I must say he did the inimitable scene great justice. At all events, the effect it produced was deep and memorable; and no wonder that the exulting typographer's *one bumper more to Jedediah Cleishbotham* preceded his parting-stave, which was uniformly *The Last Words of Marmion*, executed certainly with no contemptible rivalry of Braham.'[1]

Over at Abbotsford things wear a still more prosperous aspect. Scott is building there, by the pleasant banks of the

[1] Vol. iv. pp. 166-168.

Tweed ; he has bought and is buying land there ; fast as the new gold comes in for a new Waverley Novel, or even faster, it changes itself into moory acres, into stone, and hewn or planted wood :

'About the middle of February' (1820), says Mr. Lockhart, 'it having been ere that time arranged that I should marry his eldest daughter in the course of the spring,—I accompanied him and part of his family on one of those flying visits to Abbotsford, with which he often indulged himself on a Saturday during term. Upon such occasions, Scott appeared at the usual hour in court, but wearing, instead of the official suit of black, his country morning-dress, green jacket and so forth, under the clerk's gown.'—'At noon, when the Court broke up, Peter Mathieson was sure to be in attendance in the Parliament Close ; and, five minutes after, the gown had been tossed off ; and Scott, rubbing his hands for glee, was under weigh for Tweedside. As we proceeded,' &c.

'Next morning there appeared at breakfast John Ballantyne, who had at this time a shooting or hunting-box a few miles off, in the vale of the Leader, and with him Mr. Constable, his guest ; and it being a fine clear day, as soon as Scott had read the church-service and one of Jeremy Taylor's sermons, we all sallied out before noon on a perambulation of his upland territories ; Maida (the hound) and the rest of the favourites accompanying our march. At starting we were joined by the constant henchman, Tom Purdie,—and I may save myself the trouble of any attempt to describe his appearance, for his master has given us an inimitably true one in introducing a certain personage of his Redgauntlet :—"He was, perhaps, sixty years old ; yet his brow was not much furrowed, and his jet-black hair was only grizzled, not whitened, by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated ; and, though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square-made, thin-flanked, and apparently combined in his frame, muscular strength and activity ; the last somewhat impaired, perhaps, by years, but the first remaining in full vigour. A hard and harsh countenance ; eyes far sunk under projecting eyebrows, which were grizzled like his hair ; a wide mouth, furnished from ear to ear with a range of unimpaired teeth of uncommon whiteness, and a size and breadth which might have become the jaws of an ogre, completed this delightful portrait." Equip this figure in Scott's cast-off green

jacket, white hat and drab trousers ; and imagine that years of kind treatment, comfort and the honest consequence of a confidential *grieve* [1] had softened away much of the hardness and harshness originally impressed on the visage by anxious penury, and the sinister habits of a *black-fisher* ;—and the Tom Purdie of 1820 stands before us.

'We were all delighted to see how completely Scott had recovered his bodily vigour, and none more so than Constable, who, as he puffed and panted after him, up one ravine and down another, often stopped to wipe his forehead, and remarked, that "it was not every author who should lead him such a dance." But Purdie's face shone with rapture as he observed how severely the swag-bellied bookseller's activity was tasked. Scott exclaimed exultingly, though, perhaps, for the tenth time, "This will be a glorious spring for our trees, Tom!" — "You may say that, Sheriff," quoth Tom,—and then lingering a moment for Constable—"My certy," he added, scratching his head, "and I think it will be a grand season for *our buiks* too." But indeed Tom always talked of *our buiks*, as if they had been as regular products of the soil as *our aits* and *our birks*. Having threaded first the Hexilcleugh and then the Rhymer's Glen, we arrived at Huntly Burn, where the hospitality of the kind *Weird Sisters*, as Scott called the Miss Fergusons, reanimated our exhausted bibliopoles, and gave them courage to extend their walk a little farther down the same famous brook. Here there was a small cottage in a very sequestered situation' (named Chiefswood), 'by making some little additions to which Scott thought it might be converted into a suitable summer residence for his daughter and future son-in-law.' * * * 'As we walked homeward, Scott being a little fatigued, laid his left hand on Tom's shoulder, and leaned heavily for support, chatting to his "Sunday pony," as he called the affectionate fellow, just as freely as with the rest of the party ; and Tom put-in his word shrewdly and manfully, and grinned and grunted whenever the joke chanced to be within his apprehension. It was easy to see that his heart swelled within him from the moment the Sheriff got his collar in his gripe.' [2]

That Abbotsford became infested to a great degree with tourists, wonder-hunters, and all that fatal species of people, may be supposed. Solitary Ettrick saw itself populous : all

[1] Overseer ; German, *graf*.

[2] Vol. iv. pp. 349–353.

paths were beaten with the feet and hoofs of an endless miscellany of pilgrims. As many as 'sixteen parties' have arrived at Abbotsford in one day; male and female; peers, Socinian preachers, whatsoever was distinguished, whatsoever had love of distinction in it! Mr. Lockhart thinks there was no literary shrine ever so bepilgrimed, except Ferney in Voltaire's time, who, however, was not half so accessible. A fatal species! These are what Schiller calls 'the flesh-flies;' buzzing swarms of bluebottles, who never fail where any taint of human glory or other corruptibility is in the wind. So has Nature decreed. Scott's *healthiness*, bodily and mental, his massive solidity of character, nowhere showed itself more decisively than in his manner of encountering this part of his fate. That his bluebottles were blue, and of the usual tone and quality, may be judged. Hear Captain Basil Hall (in a very compressed state):

'We arrived in good time, and found several other guests at dinner. The public rooms are lighted with oil-gas, in a style of extraordinary splendour. The,' &c.—'Had I a hundred pens, each of which at the same time should separately write down an anecdote, I could not hope to record one-half of those which our host, to use Spenser's expression, "welled out alway."'—'Entertained us all the way with an endless string of anecdotes;' — 'came like a stream of poetry from his lips;' —'path muddy and scarcely passable, yet I do not remember ever to have seen any place so interesting as the skill of this mighty magician had rendered this narrow ravine.' — 'Impossible to touch on any theme, but straightway he has an anecdote to fit it.' — 'Thus we strolled along, borne, as it were, on the stream of song and story.'— 'In the evening we had a great feast indeed. Sir Walter asked us if we had ever read Christabel.'—'Interspersed with these various readings, were some hundreds of stories, some quaint, some pathetical.'— 'At breakfast to-day we had, as usual, some 150 stories—God knows how they came in.'— 'In any man so gifted—so qualified to take the loftiest, proudest line at the head of the literature, the taste, the imagination of the whole world!'— 'For instance, he never sits at any particular place at table, but takes,' &c. &c.[1]

[1] Vol. v. pp. 375–402.

Among such worshippers, arriving in 'sixteen parties a-day,' an ordinary man might have grown buoyant; have felt the god, begun to nod, and seemed to shake the spheres. A slightly splenetic man, possessed of Scott's sense, would have swept his premises clear of them: Let no bluebottle approach here, to disturb a man in his work,—under pain of sugared *squash* (called quassia) and king's yellow! The good Sir Walter, like a quiet brave man, did neither. He let the matter take its course; enjoyed what was enjoyable in it; endured what could not well be helped; persisted meanwhile in writing his daily portion of romance-*copy*, in preserving his composure of heart;—in a word, accommodated himself to this loud-buzzing environment, and made it serve him, as he would have done (perhaps with more ease) to a silent, poor and solitary one. No doubt it affected him too, and in the lamentablest way fevered his internal life, though he kept it well down; but it affected him *less* than it would have done almost any other man. For his guests were not all of the bluebottle sort; far from that, Mr. Lockhart shall furnish us with the brightest aspect a British Ferney ever yielded, or is like to yield: and therewith we will quit Abbotsford and the dominant and culminant period of Scott's life:

'It was a clear, bright September morning, with a sharpness in the air that doubled the animating influence of the sunshine, and all was in readiness for a grand coursing-match on Newark Hill. The only guest who had chalked-out other sport for himself was the stanchest of anglers, Mr. Rose; but he too was there on his *shelty*, armed with his salmon-rod and landing-net, and attended by his Hinves, and Charlie Purdie, a brother of Tom, in those days the most celebrated fisherman of the district. This little group of Waltonians, bound for Lord Somerville's preserve, remained lounging about, to witness the start of the main cavalcade. Sir Walter, mounted on Sibyl, was marshalling the order of procession with a huge hunting-whip; and among a dozen frolicsome youths and maidens, who seemed disposed to laugh at all discipline, appeared, each on horseback, each as eager as the youngest sportsman in the troop, Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Wollaston, and the patriarch of Scottish belles-lettres, Henry Mackenzie.

The Man of Feeling, however, was persuaded with some difficulty to resign his steed for the present to his faithful negro follower, and to join Lady Scott in the sociable, until we should reach the ground of our *battue*. Laidlaw, on a strong-tailed wiry Highlander, yclept *Hoddin Grey*, which carried him nimbly and stoutly, although his feet almost touched the ground as he sat, was the adjutant. But the most picturesque figure was the illustrious inventor of the safety-lamp. He had come for his favourite sport of angling, and had been practising it successfully with Rose, his travelling companion, for two or three days preceding this; but he had not prepared for coursing fields, or had left Charlie Purdie's troop for Sir Walter's on a sudden thought, and his fisherman's costume—a brown hat with flexible brim, surrounded with line upon line of catgut, and innumerable fly-hooks—jack-boots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon, made a fine contrast with the smart jackets, white-cord breeches, and well-polished jockey-boots of the less distinguished cavaliers about him. Dr. Wollaston was in black; and with his noble serene dignity of countenance might have passed for a sporting archbishop. Mr. Mackenzie, at this time in the 76th year of his age, with a white hat turned up with green, green spectacles, green jacket, and long brown leathern gaiters buttoned upon his nether anatomy, wore a dog-whistle round his neck, and had, all over, the air of as resolute a devotee as the gay captain of Huntly Burn. Tom Purdie and his subalterns had preceded us by a few hours with all the greyhounds that could be collected at Abbotsford, Darnick, and Melrose; but the giant Maida had remained as his master's orderly, and now gambolled about Sibyl Grey, barking for mere joy like a spaniel puppy.

'The order of march had been all settled, and the sociable was just getting under way, when *the Lady Anne* broke from the line, screaming with laughter, and exclaimed, "Papa, papa, I knew you could never think of going without your pet!" Scott looked round, and I rather think there was a blush as well as a smile upon his face, when he perceived a little black pig frisking about his pony, and evidently a self-elected addition to the party of the day. He tried to look stern, and cracked his whip at the creature, but was in a moment obliged to join in the general cheers. Poor piggy soon found a strap round its neck, and was dragged into the back-

ground ;—Scott, watching the retreat, repeated with mock pathos the first verse of an old pastoral song—

"What will I do gin my hoggie die ?
My joy, my pride, my hoggie !
My only beast, I had na mae,
And wow ! but I was vogie ! "

—the cheers were redoubled—and the squadron moved on.

'This pig had taken, nobody could tell how, a most sentimental attachment to Scott, and was constantly urging its pretensions to be admitted a regular member of his *tail* along with the greyhounds and terriers ; but, indeed, I remember him suffering another summer under the same sort of pertinacity on the part of an affectionate hen. I leave the explanation for philosophers ;—but such were the facts. I have too much respect for the vulgarly calumniated donkey, to name him in the same category of pets with the pig and the hen ; but a year or two after this time, my wife used to drive a couple of these animals in a little garden-chair, and whenever her father appeared at the door of our cottage, we were sure to see Hannah More and Lady Morgan (as Anne Scott had wickedly christened them) trotting from their pasture, to lay their noses over the paling, and, as Washington Irving says of the old white-haired hedger with the Parisian snuff-box, "to have a pleasant crack wi' the laird." [1]

[1] Vol. v. pp. 7–10.

On this subject let us report an anecdote furnished by a correspondent of our own, whose accuracy we can depend on :—'I myself was acquainted with a little Blenheim cocker, one of the smallest, beautifullest and wisest of lapdogs or dogs, which, though Sir Walter knew it not, was very singular in its behaviour towards him. *Shandy*, so hight this remarkable cocker, was extremely shy of strangers: promenading on Prince's Street, which in fine weather used to be crowded in those days, he seemed to live in perpetual fear of being stolen ; if any one but looked at him admiringly, he would draw-back with angry timidity, and crouch towards his own lady-mistress. One day a tall, irregular, busy-looking man came halting by ; the little dog ran towards him, began fawning, frisking, licking at his feet : it was Sir Walter Scott ! Had Shandy been the most extensive reader of Reviews, he could not have done better. Every time he saw Sir Walter afterwards, which was some three or four times in the course of visiting Edinburgh, he repeated his demonstrations, ran leaping, frisking, licking the Author of Waverley's feet. The good Sir Walter endured it with good-humour ; looked down at the little wise face, at the silky shag-coat of snow-white and chestnut-brown ; smiled, and avoided hitting him as they went on,—till a new division

'There' at Chiefswood 'my wife and I spent this summer and autumn of 1821 ;—the first of several seasons which will ever dwell on my memory as the happiest of my life. We were near enough Abbotsford to partake as often as we liked of its brilliant and constantly varying society ; yet could do so without being exposed to the worry and exhaustion of spirit which the daily reception of new-comers entailed upon all the family, except Sir Walter himself. But, in truth, even he was not always proof against the annoyances connected with such a style of open housekeeping. Even his temper sank sometimes under the solemn applauses of learned dulness, the vapid raptures of painted and periwigged dowagers, the horseleech avidity with which underbred foreigners urged their questions, and the pompous simpers of condescending magnates. When sore beset at home in this way, he would every now and then discover that he had some very particular business to attend to on an outlying part of his estate ; and, craving the indulgence of his guests overnight, appear at the cabin in the glen before its inhabitants were astir in the morn-

of streets or some other obstacle put an end to the interview. In fact he was a strange little fellow, this Shandy. He has been known to sit for hours looking out at the summer moon, with the saddest wistfullest expression of countenance ; altogether like a Werterean Poet. He would have been a Poet, I daresay, if he could have found a *publisher*. But his moral tact was the most amazing. Without reason shown, without word spoken or act done, he took his likings and dislikings; unalterable ; really almost unerring. His chief aversion, I should say, was to the genus *quack*, above all to the genus *acrid-quack ;* these, though never so clear-starched, bland-smiling and beneficent, he absolutely would have no trade with. Their very sugar-cake was unavailing. He said with emphasis, as clearly as barking could say it : "Acrid-quack, avaunt!" Would to Heaven many a prime-minister, and high person in authority, had such an invaluable talent! On the whole, there is more in this universe than our philosophy has dreamt of. A dog's instinct is a voice of Nature too ; and farther, *it* has never babbled itself away in idle jargon and hypothesis, but always adhered to the practical, and grown in silence by continual communion with fact. We do the animals injustice. Their body resembles our body, Buffon says ; with its four limbs, with its spinal marrow, main organs in the head and so forth : but have they not a kind of soul equally the rude draught and imperfect imitation of ours ? It is a strange, an almost solemn and pathetic thing to see an intelligence imprisoned in that dumb rude form ; struggling to express itself out of that,—even as we do out of our imprisonment ; and succeed very imperfectly!'

ing. The clatter of Sibyl Grey's hoofs, the yelping of Mustard and Spice, and his own joyous shout of *reveille* under our windows, were the signal that he had burst his toils, and meant for that day to "take his ease in his inn." On descending, he was to be found seated with all his dogs and ours about him, under a spreading ash that overshadowed half the bank between the cottage and the brook, pointing the edge of his woodman's-axe, and listening to Tom Purdie's lecture touching the plantation that most needed thinning. After breakfast he would take possession of a dressing-room upstairs, and write a chapter of *The Pirate;* and then, having made up and despatched his packet for Mr. Ballantyne, away to join Purdie wherever the foresters were at work—and sometimes to labour among them as strenuously as John Swanston, —until it was time either to rejoin his own party at Abbotsford, or the quiet circle of the cottage. When his guests were few and friendly, he often made them come over and meet him at Chiefswood in a body towards evening; and surely he never appeared to more amiable advantage than when helping his young people with their little arrangements upon such occasions. He was ready with all sorts of devices to supply the wants of a narrow establishment; he used to delight particularly in sinking the wine in a well under the *brae* ere he went out, and hauling up the basket just before dinner was announced,—this primitive device being, he said, what he had always practised when a young housekeeper, and in his opinion far superior in its results to any application of ice: and in the same spirit, whenever the weather was sufficiently genial, he voted for dining out of doors altogether, which at once got rid of the inconvenience of very small rooms, and made it natural and easy for the gentlemen to help the ladies, so that the paucity of servants went for nothing.[1]

Surely all this is very beautiful; like a picture of Boccaccio: the ideal of a country life in our time. Why could it not last? Income was not wanting: Scott's official permanent income was amply adequate to meet the expense of all that was valuable in it; nay, of all that was not harassing, senseless and despicable. Scott had some 2,000*l.* a-year without writing books at all. Why should he manufacture and not create, to make more money; and rear mass on mass

[1] Vol. v. pp. 123, 124.

for a dwelling to himself, till the pile toppled, sank crashing, and buried him in its ruins, when he had a safe pleasant dwelling ready of its own accord? Alas, Scott, with all his health, was *infected;* sick of the fearfullest malady, that of Ambition! To such length had the King's baronetcy, the world's favour and 'sixteen parties a-day,' brought it with him. So the inane racket must be kept up, and rise ever higher. So masons labour, ditchers delve; and there is endless, altogether deplorable correspondence about marble-slabs for tables, wainscotting of rooms, curtains and the trimmings of curtains, orange-coloured or fawn-coloured: Walter Scott, one of the gifted of the world, whom his admirers call the most gifted, must kill himself that he may be a country gentleman, the founder of a race of Scottish lairds. It is one of the strangest, most tragical histories ever enacted under this sun. So poor a passion can lead so strong a man into such mad extremes. Surely, were not man a fool always, one might say there was something eminently distracted in this, *end* as it would, of a Walter Scott writing daily with the ardour of a steam-engine, that he might make 15,000*l.* a-year, and buy upholstery with it. To cover the walls of a stone house in Selkirkshire with nicknacks, ancient armour and genealogical shields, what can we name it but a being bit with delirium of a kind? That tract after tract of moorland in the shire of Selkirk should be joined together on parchment and by ring-fence, and named after one's name,—why, it is a shabby small-type edition of your vulgar Napoleons, Alexanders, and conquering heroes, not counted venerable by any teacher of men!—

> 'The whole world was not half so wide
> To Alexander when he cried
> Because he had but one to subdue,
> As was a narrow paltry tub to
> Diogenes; who ne'er was said,
> For aught that ever I could read,
> To whine, put finger i' the eye and sob,
> Because he had ne'er another tub.'

Not he! And if, 'looked at from the Moon, which itself is far from Infinitude,' Napoleon's dominions were as small as

mine, *what*, by any chance of possibility, could Abbotsford landed-property ever have become? As the Arabs say, there is a black speck, were it no bigger than a bean's eye, in every soul; which, once set it a-working, will overcloud the whole man into darkness and quasi-madness, and hurry him balefully into Night!

With respect to the literary character of these Waverley Novels, so extraordinary in their commercial character, there remains, after so much reviewing, good and bad, little that it were profitable at present to say. The great fact about them is, that they were faster written and better paid for than any other books in the world. It must be granted, moreover, that they have a worth far surpassing what is usual in such cases; nay, that if Literature had no task but that of harmlessly amusing indolent languid men, here was the very perfection of Literature; that a man, here more emphatically than ever elsewhere, might fling himself back, exclaiming, "Be mine to lie on this sofa, and read everlasting Novels of Walter Scott!" The composition, slight as it often is, usually hangs together in some measure, and *is* a composition. There is a free flow of narrative, of incident and sentiment; an easy master-like coherence throughout, as if it were the free dash of a master's hand, 'round as the O of Giotto.'[1] It is the perfection of extemporaneous writing. Farthermore, surely he were a blind critic who did not recognise here a certain genial sunshiny freshness and picturesqueness; paintings both of scenery and figures, very graceful, brilliant, occasionally full of grace and glowing brightness blended in the softest

[1] 'Venne a Firenze' (il cortigiano del Papa), 'e andato una mattina in bottega di Giotto, che lavorava, gli chiese un poco di disegno per mandarlo a sua Santità. Giotto, che garbatissimo era, prese un foglio, ed in quello con un pennello tinto di rosso, fermato il braccio al fianco per farne compasso, e girato la mano fece un tondo sì pari di sesto e di profilo, che fu a vederlo una maraviglia. Ciò fatto ghignando disse al cortigiano, Eccovi il disegno.' . . 'Onde il Papa, e molti cortigiani intendenti conobbero perciò, quanto Giotto avanzasse d' eccelenza tutti gli altri pittori del suo tempo. Divolgatasi poi questa cosa, ne nacque il proverbio, che ancora è in uso dirsi a gli uomini di grossa pasta: *Tu sei più tondo che l' O di Giotto.*'—Vasari, *Vite* (Roma, 1759), i. 46.

composure ; in fact, a deep sincere love of the beautiful in Nature and Man, and the readiest faculty of expressing this by imagination and by word. No fresher paintings of Nature can be found than Scott's ; hardly anywhere a wider sympathy with man. From Davie Deans up to Richard Cœur-de-Lion ; from Meg Merrilies to Die Vernon and Queen Elizabeth ! It is the utterance of a man of open soul ; of a brave, large, free-seeing man, who has a true brotherhood with all men. In joyous picturesqueness and fellow-feeling, freedom of eye and heart ; or to say it in a word, in general *healthiness* of mind, these Novels prove Scott to have been amongst the foremost writers.

Neither in the higher and highest excellence, of drawing character, is he at any time altogether deficient ; though at no time can we call him, in the best sense, successful. His Baillie Jarvies, Dinmonts, Dalgettys (for their name is legion), do look and talk like what they give themselves out for ; they are, if not *created* and made poetically alive, yet deceptively *enacted* as a good player might do them. What more is wanted, then ? For the reader lying on a sofa, nothing more ; yet for another sort of reader, much. It were a long chapter to unfold the difference in drawing a character between a Scott, and a Shakspeare, a Goethe. Yet it is a difference literally immense ; they are of different species ; the value of the one is not to be counted in the coin of the other. We might say in a short word, which means a long matter, that your Shakspeare fashions his characters from the heart outwards ; your Scott fashions them from the skin inwards, never getting near the heart of them ! The one set become living men and women ; the other amount to little more than mechanical cases, deceptively painted automatons. Compare Fenella with Goethe's Mignon, which, it was once said, Scott had 'done Goethe the honour' to borrow. He has borrowed what he could of Mignon. The small stature, the climbing talent, the trickiness, the *mechanical case*, as we say, he has borrowed ; but the soul of Mignon is left behind. Fenella is an unfavourable specimen for Scott ; but it illustrates in the aggravated state, what is traceable in all the characters he drew.

To the same purport, indeed, we are to say that these famed books are altogether addressed to the every-day mind; that for any other mind, there is next to no nourishment in them. Opinions, emotions, principles, doubts, beliefs, beyond what the intelligent country gentleman can carry along with him, are not to be found. It is orderly, customary, it is prudent, decent; nothing more. One would say, it lay not in Scott to give much more; getting out of the ordinary range, and attempting the heroic, which is but seldom the case, he falls almost at once into the rose-pink sentimental,—descries the Minerva Press from afar, and hastily quits that course; for none better than he knew it to lead nowhither. On the whole, contrasting *Waverley*, which was carefully written, with most of its followers, which were written extempore, one may regret the extempore method. Something very perfect in its kind might have come from Scott; nor was it a low kind: nay, who knows how high, with studious self-concentration, he might have gone; what wealth Nature had implanted in him, which his circumstances, most unkind while seeming to be kindest, had never impelled him to unfold?

But after all, in the loudest blaring and trumpeting of popularity, it is ever to be held in mind, as a truth remaining true forever, that Literature *has* other aims than that of harmlessly amusing indolent languid men: or if Literature have them not, then Literature is a very poor affair; and something else must have them, and must accomplish them, with thanks or without thanks; the thankful or thankless world were not long a world otherwise! Under this head there is little to be sought or found in the Waverley Novels. Not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for edification, for building up or elevating, in any shape! The sick heart will find no healing here, the darkly struggling heart no guidance: the Heroic that is in all men no divine awakening voice. We say, therefore, that they do not found themselves on deep interests, but on comparatively trivial ones; not on the perennial, perhaps not even on the lasting. In fact, much of the interest of these Novels results from what may be called contrasts of costume. The phraseology, fashion of arms, of

dress and life, belonging to one age, is brought suddenly with singular vividness before the eyes of another. A great effect this; yet by the very nature of it, an altogether temporary one. Consider, brethren, shall not we too one day be antiques, and grow to have as quaint a costume as the rest? The stuffed Dandy, only give him *time*, will become one of the wonderfullest mummies. In antiquarian museums, only two centuries hence, the steeple-hat will hang on the next peg to Franks and Company's patent, antiquarians deciding which is uglier: and the Stulz swallow-tail, one may hope, will seem as incredible as any garment that ever made ridiculous the respectable back of man. Not by slashed breeches, steeple-hats, buff-belts, or antiquated speech, can romance-heroes continue to interest us; but simply and solely, in the long-run, by being men. Buff-belts and all manner of jerkins and costumes are transitory; man alone is perennial. He that has gone deeper into this than other men, will be remembered longer than they; he that has not, not. Tried under this category, Scott, with his clear practical insight, joyous temper, and other sound faculties, is not to be accounted little,—among the ordinary circulating-library heroes he might well pass for a demigod. Not little, yet neither is he great; there were greater, more than one or two, in his own age: among the great of all ages, one sees no likelihood of a place for him.

What then is the result of these Waverley Romances? Are they to amuse one generation only? One or more. As many generations as they can; but not all generations: ah no, when our swallow-tail has become fantastic as trunk-hose, they will cease to amuse!—Meanwhile, as we can discern, their results have been several-fold. First of all, and certainly not least of all, have they not perhaps had this result: that a considerable portion of mankind has hereby been sated with mere amusement, and set on seeking something better? Amusement in the way of reading can go no farther, can do nothing better, by the power of man; and men ask, Is this what it can do? Scott, we reckon, carried several things to their ultimatum and crisis, so that change became

inevitable: a great service, though an indirect one. Secondly, however, we may say, these Historical Novels have taught all men this truth, which looks like a truism, and yet was as good as unknown to writers of history and others, till so taught: that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men, not by protocols, state-papers, controversies and abstractions of men. Not abstractions were they, not diagrams and theorems; but men, in buff or other coats and breeches, with colour in their cheeks, with passions in their stomach, and the idioms, features and vitalities of very men. It is a little word this; inclusive of great meaning! History will henceforth have to take thought of it. Her faint hearsays of 'philosophy teaching by experience' will have to exchange themselves everywhere for direct inspection and embodiment: this, and this only, will be counted experience; and till once experience have got in, philosophy will reconcile herself to wait at the door. It is a great service, fertile in consequences, this that Scott has done; a great truth laid open by him;—correspondent indeed to the substantial nature of the man; to his solidity and veracity even of imagination, which, with all his lively discursiveness, was the characteristic of him.

A word here as to the extempore style of writing, which is getting much celebrated in these days. Scott seems to have been a high proficient in it. His rapidity was extreme, and the matter produced was excellent, considering that: the circumstances under which some of his Novels, when he could not himself write, were dictated, are justly considered wonderful. It is a valuable faculty this of ready-writing; nay farther, for Scott's purpose it was clearly the only good mode. By much labour he could not have added one guinea to his copyright; nor could the reader on the sofa have lain a whit more at ease. It was in all ways necessary that these works should be produced rapidly; and, round or not, be thrown-off like Giotto's O. But indeed, in all things, writing or other, which a man engages in, there is the indispensablest beauty in knowing *how to get done*. A man frets himself to no purpose; he has not the sleight of the trade; he is not a crafts-

man, but an unfortunate borer and bungler, if he know not when to have done. Perfection is unattainable : no carpenter ever made a mathematically accurate right-angle in the world ; yet all carpenters know when it is right enough, and do not botch it, and lose their wages, by making it too right. Too much painstaking speaks disease in one's mind, as well as too little. The adroit sound-minded man will endeavour to spend on each business approximately what of pains it deserves ; and with a conscience void of remorse will dismiss it then. All this in favour of easy writing shall be granted, and, if need were, enforced and inculcated. And yet, on the other hand, it shall not less but more strenuously be inculcated, that in the way of writing, no great thing was ever, or will ever be done with ease, but with difficulty ! Let ready-writers with any faculty in them lay this to heart. Is it with ease, or not with ease, that a man shall *do his best*, in any shape ; above all, in this shape justly named of 'soul's travail,' working in the deep places of thought, embodying the True out of the Obscure and Possible, environed on all sides with the uncreated False ? Not so, now or at any time. The experience of all men belies it ; the nature of things contradicts it. Virgil and Tacitus, were they ready-writers ? The whole *Prophecies of Isaiah* are not equal in extent to this cobweb of a Review Article. Shakspeare, we may fancy, wrote with rapidity ; but not till he had thought with intensity : long and sore had this man thought, as the seeing eye may discern well, and had dwelt and wrestled amid dark pains and throes,—though his great soul is silent about all that. It was for him to write rapidly at fit intervals, being ready to do it. And herein truly lies the secret of the matter : such swiftness of mere writing, after due energy of preparation, is doubtless the right method ; the hot furnace having long worked and simmered, let the pure gold flow out at one gush. It was Shakspeare's plan ; no easy writer he, or he had never been a Shakspeare. Neither was Milton one of the mob of gentlemen that write with ease ; he did not attain Shakspeare's faculty, one perceives, of even writing fast *after* long preparation, but struggled while he wrote. Goethe also tells us he 'had nothing sent him in his

sleep;' no page of his but he knew well how it came there. It is reckoned to be the best prose, accordingly, that has been written by any modern. Schiller, as an unfortunate and unhealthy man, '*könnte nie fertig werden*, never could get done;' the noble genius of him struggled not wisely but too well, and wore his life itself heroically out. Or did Petrarch write easily? Dante sees himself 'growing lean' over his *Divine Comedy;* in stern solitary death-wrestle with it, to prevail over it, and do it, if his uttermost faculty may: hence, too, it is done and prevailed over, and the fiery life of it endures for evermore among men. No: creation, one would think, cannot be easy; your Jove has severe pains, and fire-flames, in the head out of which an armed Pallas is struggling! As for manufacture, that is a different matter, and may become easy or not easy, according as it is taken up. Yet of manufacture too, the general truth is that, given the manufacturer, it will be worthy in direct proportion to the pains bestowed upon it; and worthless always, or nearly so, with no pains. Cease, therefore, O ready-writer, to brag openly of thy rapidity and facility; to thee (if thou be in the manufacturing line) it is a benefit, an increase of wages; but to me it is sheer loss, worsening of my pennyworth: why wilt thou brag of it to me? Write easily, by steam if thou canst contrive it, and canst sell it, but hide it like virtue! "Easy writing," said Sheridan, "is sometimes d—d hard reading." Sometimes; and always it is sure to be rather useless reading, which indeed (to a creature of few years and much work) may be reckoned the hardest of all.

Scott's productive facility amazed everybody; and set Captain Hall, for one, upon a very strange method of accounting for it without miracle;—for which see his Journal, above quoted from. The Captain, on counting line for line, found that he himself had written in that Journal of his almost as much as Scott, at odd hours in a given number of days; 'and as for the invention,' says he, 'it is known that this costs Scott nothing, but comes to him of its own accord.' Convenient indeed!—But for us too Scott's rapidity is great, is a proof and consequence of the solid health of the man, bodily and spirit-

ual; great, but unmiraculous; not greater than that of many others besides Captain Hall. Admire it, yet with measure. For observe always, there are two conditions in work: let me fix the quality, and *you* shall fix the quantity! Any man may get through work rapidly who easily satisfies himself about it. Print the *talk* of any man, there will be a thick octavo volume daily; make his writing three times as good as his talk, there will be the third part of a volume daily, which still is good work. To write with never such rapidity in a passable manner, is indicative not of a man's genius, but of his habits; it will prove his soundness of nervous system, his practicality of mind, and in fine, that he has the knack of his trade. In the most flattering view, rapidity will betoken health of mind: much also, perhaps most of all, will depend on health of body. Doubt it not, a faculty of easy writing is attainable by man! The human genius, once fairly set in this direction, will carry it far. William Cobbett, one of the healthiest of men, was a greater improviser even than Walter Scott: his writing, considered as to quality and quantity; of Rural Rides, Registers, Grammars, Sermons, Peter Porcupines, Histories of Reformation, ever-fresh denouncements of Potatoes and Paper-money, —seems to us still more wonderful. Pierre Bayle wrote enormous folios, one sees not on what motive-principle; he flowed-on forever, a mighty tide of ditch-water; and even died flowing, with the pen in his hand. But indeed the most unaccountable ready-writer of all is, probably, the common Editor of a Daily Newspaper. Consider his leading articles; what they treat of, how passably they are done. Straw that has been thrashed a hundred times without wheat; ephemeral sound of a sound; such portent of the hour as all men have seen a hundred times turn out inane: how a man, with merely human faculty, buckles himself nightly with new vigour and interest to this thrashed straw, nightly thrashes it anew, nightly gets-up new thunder about it; and so goes on thrashing and thundering for a considerable series of years; this is a fact remaining still to be accounted for, in human physiology. The vitality of man is great.

Or shall we say, Scott, among the many things he carried

towards their ultimatum and crisis, carried this of ready-writing too, that so all men might better see what was in it? It is a valuable consummation. Not without results;—results, at some of which Scott as a Tory politician would have greatly shuddered. For if once Printing have grown to be as Talk, then Democracy (if we look into the roots of things) is not a bugbear and probability, but a certainty, and event as good as come! 'Inevitable seems it me.' But leaving this, sure enough the triumph of ready-writing appear to be even now; everywhere the ready-writer is found bragging strangely of his readiness. In a late translated *Don Carlos*, one of the most indifferent translations ever done with any sign of ability, a hitherto unknown individual is found assuring his reader, 'The reader will possibly think it an excuse, when I assure him that the whole piece was completed within the space of ten weeks, that is to say, between the sixth of January and the eighteenth of March of this year (inclusive of a fortnight's interruption from over-exertion); that I often translated twenty pages a-day, and that the fifth act was the work of five days.'[1] O hitherto unknown individual, what is it to me what time it was the work of, whether five days or five decades of years? The only question is, How hast thou done it?—So, however, it stands: the genius of Extempore irresistibly lording it, advancing on us like ocean-tides, like Noah's deluges—of ditch-water! The prospect seems one of the lamentablest. To have all Literature swum away from us in watery Extempore, and a spiritual time of Noah supervene? That surely is an awful reflection; worthy of dyspeptic Matthew Bramble in a London fog! Be of comfort, O splenetic Matthew; it is not Literature they are swimming away; it is only Book-publishing and Book-selling. Was there not a Literature *before* Printing or Faust of Mentz, and yet men wrote extempore? Nay, before Writing or Cadmus of Thebes, and yet men spoke extempore? Literature is the Thought of thinking Souls; this, by the blessing of God, can in no generation be swum away, but remains with us to the end.

[1] *Don Carlos*, a Dramatic Poem, from the German of Schiller. Mannheim and London, 1837.

Scott's career, of writing impromptu novels to buy farms with, was not of a kind to terminate voluntarily, but to accelerate itself more and more ; and one sees not to what wise goal it could, in any case, have led him. Bookseller Constable's bankruptcy was not the ruin of Scott ; his ruin was, that ambition, and even false ambition, had laid hold of him ; that his way of life was not wise. Whither could it lead ? Where could it stop ? New farms there remained ever to be bought, while new novels could pay for them. More and more success but gave more and more appetite, more and more audacity. The impromptu writing must have waxed ever thinner ; declined faster and faster into the questionable category, into the condemnable, into the generally condemned. Already there existed, in secret, everywhere a considerable opposition party ; witnesses of the Waverley miracles, but unable to believe in them, forced silently to protest against them. Such opposition party was in the sure case to grow ; and even, with the impromptu process ever going on, ever waxing thinner, to draw the world over to it. Silent protest must at length come to words ; harsh truths, backed by harsher facts of a world-popularity overwrought and worn-out, behoved to have been spoken ;—such as can be spoken now without reluctance, when they can pain the brave man's heart no more. Who knows ? Perhaps it was better ordered to be all *otherwise.* Otherwise, at any rate, it was. One day the Constable mountain, which seemed to stand strong like the other rock mountains, gave suddenly, as the icebergs do, a loud-sounding crack ; suddenly, with huge clangor, shivered itself into ice-dust ; and sank, carrying much along with it. In one day Scott's high-heaped money-wages became fairy-money and nonentity ; in one day the rich man and lord of land saw himself penniless, landless, a bankrupt among creditors.

It was a hard trial. He met it proudly, bravely,—like a brave proud man of the world. Perhaps there had been a prouder way still : to have owned honestly that he *was* unsuccessful then, all bankrupt, broken, in the world's goods and repute ; and to have turned elsewhither for some refuge. Refuge did lie elsewhere ; but it was not Scott's course, or

fashion of mind, to seek it there. To say, Hitherto I have been all in the wrong, and this my fame and pride, now broken, was an empty delusion and spell of accursed witchcraft! It was difficult for flesh and blood! He said, I will retrieve myself, and make my point good yet, or die for it. Silently, like a proud strong man, he girt himself to the Hercules' task, of removing rubbish-mountains, since that was it; of paying large ransoms by what he could still write and sell. In his declining years too; misfortune is doubly and trebly unfortunate that befalls us then. Scott fell to his Hercules' task like a very man, and went on with it unweariedly; with a noble cheerfulness, while his life-strings were cracking, he grappled with it, and wrestled with it, years long, in death-grips, strength to strength;—and *it* proved the stronger; and his life and heart did crack and break: the cordage of a most strong heart! Over these last writings of Scott, his *Napoleons*, *Demonologies*, *Scotch Histories*, and the rest, criticism, finding still much to wonder at, much to commend, will utter no word of blame; this one word only, Woe is me! The noble war-horse that once laughed at the shaking of the spear, how is he doomed to toil himself dead, dragging ignoble wheels! Scott's descent was like that of a spent projectile: rapid, straight down;—perhaps mercifully so. It is a tragedy, as all life is; one proof more that Fortune stands on a restless *globe;* that Ambition, literary, warlike, politic, pecuniary, never yet profited any man.

Our last extract shall be from Volume Sixth; a very tragical one. Tragical, yet still beautiful; waste Ruin's havoc borrowing a kind of sacredness from a yet sterner visitation, that of Death! Scott has withdrawn into a solitary lodging-house in Edinburgh, to do daily the day's work there; and had to leave his wife at Abbotsford in the last stage of disease. He went away silently; looked silently at the sleeping face he scarcely hoped ever to see again. We quote from a Diary he had begun to keep in those months, on hint from Byron's *Ravenna Journal:* copious sections of it render this Sixth Volume more interesting than any of the former ones.

'*Abbotsford, May* 11 (1826).— * * It withers my heart to think of it, and to recollect that I can hardly hope again to seek confidence and counsel from that ear, to which all might be safely confided. But in her present lethargic state, what would my attendance have availed?—and Anne has promised close and constant intelligence. I must dine with James Ballantyne to-day *en famille*. I cannot help it; but would rather be at home and alone. However, I can go out too. I will not yield to the barren sense of hopelessness which struggles to invade me.

'*Edinburgh,—Mrs. Brown's lodgings, North St. David Street —May* 12.—I passed a pleasant day with kind J. B., which was a great relief from the black dog, which would have worried me at home. He was quite alone.

'Well, here I am in Arden. And I may say with Touchstone, "When I was at home I was in a better place;" I must, when there is occasion, draw to my own Baillie Nicol Jarvie's consolation—"One cannot carry the comforts of the Saut-Market about with one." Were I at ease in mind, I think the body is very well cared for. Only one other lodger in the house, a Mr. Shandy,—a clergyman, and, despite his name, said to be a quiet one.'

'*May* 14.—A fair good-morrow to you, Mr. Sun, who are shining so brightly on these dull walls. Methinks you look as if you were looking as bright on the banks of the Tweed; but look where you will, Sir Sun, you look upon sorrow and suffering.—Hogg was here yesterday, in danger, from having obtained an accommodation of 100*l.* from James Ballantyne, which he is now obliged to repay. I am unable to help the poor fellow, being obliged to borrow myself.'

'*May* 15.—Received the melancholy intelligence that all is over at Abbotsford.'

'*Abbotsford, May* 16.—She died at nine in the morning, after being very ill for two days—easy at last. I arrived here late last night. Anne is worn out, and has had hysterics, which returned on my arrival. Her broken accents were like those of a child, the language as well as the tones broken, but in the most gentle voice of submission. "Poor mamma—never return again—gone forever—a better place." Then, when she came to herself, she spoke with sense, freedom and strength of mind, till her weakness returned. It would have been inexpressibly moving to me as a stranger—what was it then to the father and the husband? For myself, I scarce

know how I feel; sometimes as firm as the Bass Rock, sometimes as weak as the water that breaks on it. I am as alert at thinking and deciding as I ever was in my life. Yet, when I contrast what this place now is, with what it has been not long since, I think my heart will break. Lonely, aged, deprived of my family—all but poor Anne; an impoverished, an embarrassed man, deprived of the sharer of my thoughts and counsels, who could always talk-down my sense of the calamitous apprehensions which break the heart that must bear them alone.—Even her foibles were of service to me, by giving me things to think of beyond my weary self-reflections.

'I have seen her. The figure I beheld is, and is not my Charlotte—my thirty-years' companion. There is the same symmetry of form, though those limbs are rigid which were once so gracefully elastic—but that yellow mask, with pinched features, which seems to mock life rather than emulate it, can it be the face that was once so full of lively expression? I will not look on it again. Anne thinks her little changed, because the latest idea she had formed of her mother is as she appeared under circumstances of extreme pain. Mine go back to a period of comparative ease. If I write long in this way, I shall write-down my resolution, which I should rather write-up, if I could.'

'*May* 18.— * * Cerements of lead and of wood already hold her; cold earth must have her soon. But it is not my Charlotte, it is not the bride of my youth, the mother of my children, that will be laid among the ruins of Dryburgh, which we have so often visited in gaiety and pastime. No, no.'

'*May* 22.— * * Well, I am not apt to shrink from that which is my duty, merely because it is painful; but I wish this funeral-day over. A kind of cloud of stupidity hangs about me, as if all were unreal that men seem to be doing and talking.'

'*May* 26.— * * Were an enemy coming upon my house, would I not do my best to fight, although oppressed in spirit; and shall a similar despondency prevent me from mental exertion? It shall not, by Heaven!'

'*Edinburgh, May* 30.—Returned to town last night with Charles. This morning resume ordinary habits of rising early, working in the morning, and attending the Court. * * * I finished correcting the proofs for the Quarterly; it is but a flimsy article, but then the circumstances were most untoward. —This has been a melancholy day—most melancholy. I am

afraid poor Charles found me weeping. I do not know what other folks feel, but with me the hysterical passion that impels tears is a terrible violence—a sort of throttling sensation—then succeeded by a state of dreaming stupidity, in which I ask if my poor Charlotte can actually be dead.' [1]

This is beautiful as well as tragical. Other scenes, in that Seventh Volume, must come, which will have no beauty, but be tragical only. It is better that we are to end here.

And so the curtain falls; and the strong Walter Scott is with us no more. A possession from him does remain; widely scattered; yet attainable; not inconsiderable. It can be said of him, When he departed, he took a Man's life along with him. No sounder piece of British manhood was put together in that eighteenth century of Time. Alas, his fine Scotch face, with its shaggy honesty, sagacity and goodness, when we saw it latterly on the Edinburgh streets, was all worn with care, the joy all fled from it;—ploughed deep with labour and sorrow. We shall never forget it; we shall never see it again. Adieu, Sir Walter, pride of all Scotchmen, take our proud and sad farewell.

[1] Vol. vi. pp. 297–307.

VARNHAGEN VON ENSE'S MEMOIRS.

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VARNHAGEN VON ENSE'S MEMOIRS.

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VARNHAGEN VON ENSE'S MEMOIRS.[1]

[1838.]

The Lady *Rahel*, or Rachel, surnamed *Levin* in her maiden days, who died some five years ago as Madam Varnhagen von Ense, seems to be still memorable and notable, or to have become more than ever so, among our German friends. The widower, long known in Berlin and Germany for an intelligent and estimable man, has here published successively, as author, or as editor and annotator, so many Volumes, Nine in all, about her, about himself, and the things that occupied and environed them. Nine Volumes, properly, of German Memoirs; of letters, of miscellanies, biographical and autobiographical; which we have read not without zeal and diligence, and in part with great pleasure. It seems to us that such of our readers as take interest in things German, ought to be apprised of this Publication; and withal that there are in it enough of things European and universal to furnish-out a few pages for readers not specially of that class.

One may hope, Germany is no longer to any person that vacant land, of gray vapour and chimeras, which it was to

[1] London and Westminster Review, No. 62.—1. *Rahel. Ein Buch des Andenkens für ihre Freunde* (Rahel. A Book of Memorial for her Friends). 3 vols. Berlin, 1834.

2. *Gallerie von Bildnissen aus Rahel's Umgang und Briefwechsel* (Gallery of Portraits from Rahel's Circle of Society and Correspondence). Edited by K. A. Varnhagen von Ense. 2 vols. Leipzig, 1836.

3. *Denkwürdigkeiten und vermischte Schriften* (Memoirs and Miscellaneous Writings). By K. A. Varnhagen von Ense. 4 vols. Mannheim, 1837–38.

most Englishmen, not many years ago. One may hope that, as readers of German have increased a hundredfold, some partial intelligence of Germany, some interest in things German, may have increased in a proportionably higher ratio. At all events, Memoirs of men, German or other, will find listeners among men. Sure enough, Berlin city, on the sandy banks of the Spree, is a living city, even as London is, on the muddy banks of Thames. Daily, with every rising of the blessed heavenly light, Berlin sends up the smoke of a hundred-thousand kindled hearths, the fret and stir of five-hundred-thousand new-awakened human souls ;—marking or defacing with *such* smoke-cloud, material or spiritual, the serene of our common all-embracing Heaven. One Heaven, the same for all, embraces that smoke-cloud too, adopts it, absorbs it, like the rest. Are there not dinner-parties, 'æsthetic teas ;' scandal-mongeries, changes of ministry, police-cases, literary-gazettes ? The clack of tongues, the sound of hammers, mounts up in that corner of the Planet too, for certain centuries of Time. Berlin has its royalties and diplomacies, its traffickings, travailings ; literatures, sculptures, cultivated heads, male and female ; and boasts itself to be 'the intellectual capital of Germany.' Nine Volumes of Memoirs out of Berlin will surely contain something for us.

Samuel Johnson, or perhaps another, used to say, there was no man on the streets whose biography he would not like to be acquainted with. No rudest mortal walking there who has not seen and known experimentally something, which, could he tell it, the wisest would hear willingly from him ! Nay, after all that can be said and celebrated about poetry, eloquence and the higher forms of composition and utterance ; is not the primary use of speech itself this same, to utter *memoirs*, that is, memorable experiences to our fellow-creatures ? A fact is a fact ; man is forever the brother of man. That thou, O my brother, impart to me truly how it stands with thee in that inner man of thine, what lively images of things past thy memory has painted there, what hopes, what thoughts, affections, knowledges do now dwell there : for this and for no other object that I can see, was

the gift of speech and of hearing bestowed on us two. I say not how thou feignest. Thy fictions, and thousand-and-one Arabian Nights, promulgated as fictions, what are they also at bottom but this, things that *are* in thee, though only images of things? But to bewilder me with *falsehoods*, indeed; to ray-out error and darkness,—misintelligence, which means misattainment, otherwise failure and sorrow; to go about confusing worse our poor world's confusion, and, as a son of Nox and Chaos, propagate delirium on earth: not surely with *this* view, but with a far different one, was that miraculous tongue suspended in thy head, and set vibrating there!—In a word, do not two things, *veracity* and *memoir-writing*, seem to be prescribed by Nature herself and the very constitution of man? Let us read, therefore, according to opportunity,—and, with judicious audacity, review!

Our Nine printed Volumes we call German Memoirs. They agree in this general character, but are otherwise to be distinguished into kinds, and differ very much in their worth for us. The first book on our list, entitled *Rahel*, is a book of private letters; three thick volumes of Letters written by that lady; selected from her wide correspondence; with a short introduction, with here and there a short note, and that on Varnhagen's part is all. Then follows, in two volumes, the work named *Gallery of Portraits;* consisting principally of Letters *to* Rahel, by various persons, mostly persons of note; to which Varnhagen, as editor, has joined some slight commentary, some short biographical sketch of each. Of these five volumes of German Letters we will say, for the present, that they seem to be calculated for Germany, and even for some special circle there, rather than for England or us. A glance at them afterwards, we hope, will be possible. But the third work, that of Varnhagen himself, is the one we must chiefly depend on here: the four volumes of *Memoirs and Miscellanies;* lively pieces; which can be safely recommended as altogether pleasant reading to every one. They are 'Miscellaneous Writings,' as their title indicates; in part collected and reprinted out of periodicals, or wherever they lay scattered; in part sent forth now for the first time. There are

criticisms, notices literary or didactic; always of a praiseworthy sort, generally of small extent. There are narrations; there is a long personal narrative, as it might be called, of service in the 'Liberation War' of 1814, wherein Varnhagen did duty as a volunteer officer in Tettenborn's corps, among the Cossacks: this is the longest piece, by no means the best. There is farther a curious narrative of Lafayette's escape (brief escape with recapture) from the Prison of Olmütz! Then also there is a curious biography of Doctor Bollmann, the brave young Hanoverian, who aided Lafayette in that adventure. Then other biographies not so curious; on the whole, there are many biographies: Biography, we might say, is the staple article; an article in which Varnhagen has long been known to excel. Lastly, as basis for the whole, there are presented, fitfully, now here, now there, and with long intervals, considerable sections of Autobiography;—not confessions, indeed, or questionable work of the Rousseau sort, but discreet reminiscences, personal and other, of a man who having looked on much, may be sure of willing audience in reporting it well. These are the Four Volumes written by Varnhagen von Ense; those are the Five edited by him. We shall regard his autobiographic memorials as a general substratum, upholding and uniting into a certain coherence the multifarious contents of these publications: it is Varnhagen von Ense's Passage through Life; this is what it yielded him; these are the things and persons he took note of, and had to do with, in travelling thus far.

Beyond ascertaining for ourselves what mannner of eyesight and way of judgment this our Memoir-writer has, it is not necessary to insist much on Varnhagen's qualities or literary character here. He seems to us a man peculiarly fitted, both by natural endowment and by position and opportunity, for writing memoirs. In the space of half a century that he has lived in this world, his course has been what we might call erratic in a high degree: from the student's garret in Halle or Tübingen to the Tuileries hall of audience and the Wagram battle-field, from Chamisso the poet to Napoleon the emperor, his path has intersected all manner of paths of

men. He has a fine intellectual gift; and what is the foundation of that and of all, an honest, sympathizing, manfully patient, manfully courageous heart. His way of life, too erratic we should fear for happiness or ease, and singularly checkered by vicissitude, has had this considerable advantage, if no other, that it has trained him, and could not but train him, to a certain catholicism of mind. He has been a student of literature, an author, a student of medicine, a soldier, a secretary, a diplomatist. A man withal of modest, affectionate nature; courteous and yet truthful; of quick apprehension, precise in utterance; of just, extensive, occasionally of deep and fine insight: this is a man qualified beyond most to write memoirs. We should call him one of the best memoir-writers we have met with; decidedly the best we know of in these days. For clearness, grace of method, easy comprehensibility, he is worthy to be ranked among the French, who have a natural turn for memoir-writing; and in respect of honesty, valorous gentleness and simplicity of heart, his character is German, not French.

Such a man, conducting us in the spirit of cheerful friendliness along his course of life, and delineating what he has found most memorable in it, produces one of the pleasantest books. Brave old Germany, in this and the other living phasis, now here, now there, from Rhineland to the East-sea, from Hamburg and Berlin to Deutsch-Wagram and the Marchfeld, paints itself in the colours of reality; with notable persons, with notable events. For consider withal in what a time this man's life has lain: in the thick of European things, while the Nineteenth Century was opening itself. Amid convulsions and revolutions, outward and inward,—with Napoleons, Goethes, Fichtes; while prodigies and battle-thunder shook the world, and, 'amid the glare of conflagrations, and the noise of falling towns and kingdoms,' a New Era of Thought was also evolving itself: one of the wonderfullest times! On the whole, if men like Varnhagen were to be met with, why have we not innumerable Memoirs? Alas, it is because the men like Varnhagen are *not* to be met with; men with the clear eye and the open heart.

Without such qualities, memoir-writers are but a nuisance; which, so often as they show themselves, a judicious world is obliged to sweep into the cesspool, with loudest possible prohibition of the like. If a man is not open-minded, if he is ignorant, perverse, egotistic, splenetic; on the whole, if he is false and stupid, how shall he write memoirs?—

From Varnhagen's young years, especially from his college years, we could extract many a lively little sketch, of figures partially known to the reader: of Chamisso, La Motte Fouqué, Raumer, and other the like; of Platonic Schleiermacher, sharp, crabbed, shrunken, with his wire-drawn logic, his sarcasms, his sly malicious ways; of Homeric Wolf, with his biting wit, with his grim earnestness and inextinguishable Homeric laugh, the irascible great-hearted man. Or of La Fontaine, the sentimental novelist, over whose rose-coloured moral-sublime what fair eye has not wept? Varnhagen found him 'in a pleasant house near the Saale-gate' of Halle, with an ugly good-tempered wife, with a pretty niece, which latter he would not allow to read a word of his romance-stuff, but 'kept it locked from her like poison;' a man jovial as Boniface, swollen-out on booksellers' profit, church-preferments and fat things, 'to the size of a hogshead;' for the rest, writing with such velocity (he did some hundred-and-fifty weeping volumes in his time) that he was obliged to hold-in, and 'write only two days in the week:' this was La Fontaine, the sentimental novelist. But omitting all these, let us pick-out a family-picture of one far better worth looking at: Jean Paul in his little home at Baireuth,—'little city of my habitation, which I belong to on this side the grave!' It is Sunday, the 23d of October 1808, according to Varnhagen's note-book. The ingenious youth of four-and-twenty, as a rambling student, passes the day of rest there, and luckily for us has kept memorandums:

'*Visit to Jean Paul Friedrich Richter.*—This forenoon I went to Jean Paul's. Friend Harscher was out of humour, and would not go, say what I would. I too, for that matter, am but a poor, nameless student; but what of that?

'A pleasant, kindly, inquisitive woman, who had opened the door to me, I at once recognised for Jean Paul's wife by her likeness to her sister. A child was sent off to call its father. He came directly; he had been forewarned of my visit by letters from Berlin and Leipzig; and received me with great kindness. As he seated himself beside me on the sofa, I had almost laughed in his face, for in bending down somewhat he had the very look our Neumann, in his *Versuchen una Hindernissen*, has jestingly given him, and his speaking and what he spoke confirmed that impression. Jean Paul is of stout figure; has a full, well-ordered face; the eyes small, gleaming-out on you with lambent fire, then again veiled in soft dimness; the mouth friendly, and with some slight motion in it even when silent. His speech is rapid, almost hasty, even stuttering somewhat here and there; not without a certain degree of dialect, difficult to designate, but which probably is some mixture of Frankish and Saxon, and of course is altogether kept-down within the rules of cultivated language.

'First of all, I had to tell him what I was charged with in the shape of messages, then whatsoever I could tell in any way, about his Berlin friends. He willingly remembered the time he had lived in Berlin, as Marcus Herz's neighbour, in Leder's house; where I, seven years before, had first seen him in the garden by the Spree, with papers in his hand, which it was privately whispered were leaves of *Hesperus*. This talk about persons, and then still more about Literature growing out of that, set him fairly underway, and soon he had more to impart than to inquire. His conversation was throughout amiable and good-natured, always full of meaning, but in quite simple tone and expression. Though I knew beforehand that his wit and humour belonged only to his pen, that he could hardly write the shortest note without these introducing themselves, while on the contrary his oral utterance seldom showed the like,—yet it struck me much that, in this continual movement and vivacity of mood to which he yielded himself, I observed no trace of these qualities. His demeanour otherwise was like his speaking; nothing forced, nothing studied, nothing that went beyond the burgher tone. His courtesy was the free expression of a kind heart; his way and bearing were patriarchal, considerate of the stranger, yet for himself too altogether unconstrained. Neither in the animation to which some word or topic would excite him, was this fundamental temper ever altered; nowhere did severity appear, nowhere any exhibiting of himself, any watching or spying of his

hearer; everywhere kind-heartedness, free movement of his somewhat loose-flowing nature, open course for him, with a hundred transitions from one course to the other, howsoever or whithersoever it seemed good to him to go. At first he praised everything that was named of our new appearances in Literature; and then, when we came a little closer to the matter, there was blame enough and to spare. So of Adam Müller's Lectures, of Friedrich Schlegel, of Tieck and others. He said, German writers ought to hold by the people, not by the upper classes, among whom all was already dead and gone; and yet he had just been praising Adam Müller, that he had the gift of speaking a deep word to cultivated people of the world. He is convinced that from the opening of the old Indian world nothing is to be got for us, except the adding of one other mode of poetry to the many modes we have already, but no increase of ideas: and yet he had just been celebrating Friedrich Schlegel's labours with the Sanscrit, as if a new salvation were to issue out of that. He was free to confess that a right Christian in these days, if not a Protestant one, was inconceivable to him; that changing from Protestantism to Catholicism seemed a monstrous perversion; and with this opinion great hope had been expressed, a few minutes before, that the Catholic spirit in Friedrich Schlegel, combined with the Indian, would produce much good! Of Schleiermacher he spoke with respect; signified, however, that he did not relish his *Plato* greatly; that in Jacobi's, in Herder's soaring flight of soul he traced far more of those divine old sages than in the learned acumen of Schleiermacher; a deliverance which I could not let pass without protest. Fichte, of whose *Addresses to the German Nation*, held in Berlin under the sound of French drums, I had much to say, was not a favourite of his; the decisiveness of that energy gave him uneasiness; he said he could only read Fichte as an exercise, "gymnastically," and that with the purport of his Philosophy he had now nothing more to do.

'Jean Paul was called out, and I stayed awhile alone with his wife. I had now to answer many new questions about Berlin; her interest in persons and things of her native town was by no means sated with what she had already heard. The lady pleased me exceedingly; soft, refined, acute, she united with the loveliest expression of household goodness an air of higher breeding and freer management than Jean Paul seemed to manifest. Yet, in this respect too, she willingly held herself inferior, and looked-up to her gifted husband. It was ap-

parent everyway that their life together was a right happy one. Their three children, a boy and two girls, are beautiful, healthy, well-conditioned creatures. I had a hearty pleasure in them: they recalled other dear children to my thoughts, whom I had lately been beside! * * *

'With continual copiousness and in the best humour, Jean Paul (we were now at table) expatiated on all manner of objects. Among the rest, I had been charged with a salutation from Rahel Levin to him, and the modest question, "Whether he remembered her still?" His face beamed with joyful satisfaction: "How could one forget such a person?" cried he impressively. "That is a woman alone of her kind: I liked her heartily well, and more now than ever, as I gain in sense and apprehension to do it; she is the only woman in whom I have found genuine humour, the one woman of this world who had humour!" He called me a lucky fellow to have such a friend; and asked, as if proving me and measuring my value, How I had deserved that?

'*Monday, 24th October.*—Being invited, I went a second time to dine. Jean Paul had just returned from a walk; his wife, with one of the children, was still out. We came upon his writings; that questionable string with most authors, which the one will not have you touch, which another will have you keep jingling continually. He was here what I expected him to be: free, unconstrained, good-natured, and sincere with his whole heart. His *Dream of a Madman*, just published by Cotta, was what had led us upon this. He said he could write such things at any time; the mood for it, when he was in health, lay in his own power; he did but seat himself at the harpsichord, and fantasying for awhile on it, in the wildest way, deliver himself over to the feeling of the moment, and then write his imaginings,—according to a certain predetermined course, indeed, which however he would often alter as he went on. In this kind he had once undertaken to write a *Hell*, such as mortal never heard of; and a great deal of it is actually done; but not fit for print. Speaking of descriptive composition, he also started as in fright when I ventured to say that Goethe was less complete in this province; he reminded me of two passages in *Werter*, which are indeed among the finest descriptions. He said that to describe any scene well, the poet must make the bosom of a man his *camera obscura*, and look at it through *this*, then would he see it poetically. * * *

'The conversation turned on public occurrences, on the con-

dition of Germany, and the oppressive rule of the French. To me discussions of that sort are usually disagreeable; but it was delightful to hear Jean Paul express, on such occasion, his noble patriotic sentiments; and, for the sake of this rock-island, I willingly swam through the empty tide of uncertain news and wavering suppositions which environed it. What he said was deep, considerate, hearty, valiant, German to the marrow of the bone. I had to tell him much; of Napoleon, whom he knew only by portraits; of Johannes von Müller; of Fichte, whom he now as a patriot admired cordially; of the Marquez de la Romana and his Spaniards, whom I had seen in Hamburg. Jean Paul said he at no moment doubted, but the Germans, like the Spaniards, would one day rise, and Prussia would avenge its disgrace, and free the country; he hoped his son would live to see it, and did not deny that he was bringing him up for a soldier. * * *

'*October* 25*th*.—I stayed to supper, contrary to my purpose, having to set-out next morning early. The lady was so kind, and Jean Paul himself so trustful and blithe, I could not withstand their entreaties. At the neat and well-furnished table (reminding you that South Germany was now near), the best humour reigned. Among other things, we had a good laugh at this, that Jean Paul offered me an introduction to one of what he called his dearest friends in Stuttgart,—and then was obliged to give it up, having irrevocably forgotten his name! Of a more serious sort, again, was our conversation about Tieck, Friedrich and Wilhelm Schlegel, and others of the romantic school. He seemed in ill humour with Tieck at the moment. Of Goethe he said: "Goethe is a consecrated head; he has a place of his own, high above us all." We spoke of Goethe afterwards, for some time: Jean Paul, with more and more admiration, nay with a sort of fear and awe-struck reverence.

'Some beautiful fruit was brought-in for dessert. On a sudden, Jean Paul started up, gave me his hand, and said: "Forgive me, I must go to bed! Stay you here in God's name, for it is still early, and chat with my wife; there is much to say, between you, which my talking has kept back. I am a *Spiessburger*" (of the Club of Odd Fellows), "and my hour is come for sleep." He took a candle, and said good-night. We parted with great cordiality, and the wish expressed on both sides, that I might stay at Baireuth another time.'

These biographic phenomena; Jean Paul's loose-flowing talk, his careless variable judgments of men and things; the prosaic basis of the free-and-easy in domestic life with the poetic Shandean, Shakspearean, and even Dantesque, that grew from it as its public outcome; all this Varnhagen had to rhyme and reconcile for himself as he best could. The loose-flowing talk and variable judgments, the fact that Richter went along, 'looking only right before him as with blinders on,' seemed to Varnhagen a pardonable, nay an amiable peculiarity, the mark of a trustful, spontaneous, artless nature; connected with whatever was best in Jean Paul. He found him on the whole (what we at a distance have always done) 'a genuine and noble man: no deception or impurity exists in his life; he is altogether as he writes, lovable, hearty, robust and brave. A valiant man I do believe: did the cause summon, I fancy he would be readier with his sword too than the most.' And so we quit our loved Jean Paul, and his simple little Baireuth home. The lights are blown-out there, the fruit-platters swept away, a dozen years ago, and all is dark now,—swallowed in the long Night. Thanks to Varnhagen, that he has, though imperfectly, rescued any glimpse of it, one scene of it, still visible to eyes, by the magic of pen and-ink.

The next picture that strikes us is not a family-piece, but a battle-piece: Deutsh-Wagram, in the hot weather of 1809; whither Varnhagen, with a great change of place and plan, has wended, purposing now to be soldier, and rise by fighting the tyrannous French. It is a fine picture; with the author's best talent in it. Deutsch-Wagram village is filled with soldiers of every uniform and grade; in all manner of movements and employments; Archduke Karl is heard 'fantasying for an hour on the pianoforte,' before his serious generalissimo duties begin. The Marchfeld has its camp, the Marchfeld is one great camp of many nations,—Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Madshars; advanced sentinels walk steady, drill-sergeants bustle, drums beat; Austrian generals gallop, 'in blue-gray coat and red breeches,'—combining 'simplicity with conspicuousness.' Faint on our south-western horizon appears the *Stephans-thurm* (Saint-Stephen's Steeple) of Vienna; south,

over the Danube, are seen endless French hosts defiling towards us, with dust and glitter, along the hill-roads; one may hope, though with misgivings, there will be work soon.

Meanwhile, in every regiment there is but one tent, a chapel, used also for shelter to the chief officers; you, a subaltern, have to lie on the ground, in your own dug trench, to which, if you can contrive it, some roofing of branches and rushes may be added. It is burning sun and dust, occasionally it is thunder-storm and water-spouts; a volunteer, if it were not for the hope of speedy battle, has a poor time of it: your soldiers speak little, except unintelligible Bohemian Sclavonic; your brother ensigns know nothing of Xenophon, Jean Paul, of patriotism, or the higher philosophies; hope only to be soon back at Prague, where are billiards and things suitable. 'The following days were heavy and void: the great summer-heat had withered grass and grove; the willows of the Russbach were long since leafless, in part barkless; on the endless Plain fell nowhere a shadow; only dim dust-clouds, driven-up by sudden whirlblasts, veiled for a moment the glaring sky, and sprinkled all things with a hot rain of sand. We gave-up drilling as impossible, and crept into our earth-holes.' It is feared, too, there will be no battle: Varnhagen has thoughts of making-off to the fighting Duke of Brunswick-Oels, or some other that will fight. 'However,' it would seem, 'the worst trial was already over. After a hot, wearying, wasting day, which promised nothing but a morrow like it, there arose on the evening of the 30th of June, from beyond the Danube, a sound of cannon-thunder; a solacing refreshment to the languid soul! A party of French, as we soon learned, had got across from the Lobau, by boats, to a little island named Mühleninsel, divided only by a small arm from our side of the river; they had then thrown a bridge over this too, with defences; our batteries at Esslingen were for hindering the enemy's passing there, and his nearest cannons about the Lobau made answer.' On the fourth day after,

'Archduke John got orders to advance again as far as Marcheck; that, in the event of a battle on the morrow, he might

act on the enemy's right flank. With us too a resolute engagement was arranged. On the 4th of July, in the evening, we were ordered, if there was cannonading in the night, to remain quiet till daybreak ; but at daybreak to be under arms. Accordingly, so soon as it was dark, there began before us, on the Danube, a violent fire of artillery ; the sky glowed ever and anon with the cannon-flashes, with the courses of bombs and grenades : for nearly two hours this thunder-game lasted on both sides ; for the French had begun their attack almost at the same time with ours, and while we were striving to ruin their works on the Lobau, they strove to burn Enzersdorf town, and ruin ours. The Austrian cannon could do little against the strong works on the Lobau. On the other hand, the enemy's attack began to tell ; in his object was a wider scope, more decisive energy ; his guns were more numerous, more effectual : in a short time Enzersdorf burst out in flames, and our artillery struggled without effect against their superiority of force. The region round had been illuminated for some time with the conflagration of that little town, when the sky grew black with heavy thunder : the rain poured down, the flames dwindled, the artillery fired seldomer, and at length fell silent altogether. A frightful thunder-storm, such as no one thought he had ever seen, now raged over the broad Marchfeld, which shook with the crashing of the thunder, and, in the pour of rain-floods and howl of winds, was in such a roar, that even the artillery could not have been heard in it.'

On the morrow morning, in spite of Austria and the war of elements, Napoleon, with his endless hosts, and 'six-hundred pieces of artillery' in front of them, is across ; advancing like a conflagration ; and soon the whole Marchfeld, far and wide, is in a blaze.

'Ever stronger batteries advanced, ever larger masses of troops came into action ; the whole line blazed with fire, and moved forward and forward. We, from our higher position, had hitherto looked at the evolutions and fightings before us, as at a show ; but now the battle had got nigher ; the air over us sang with cannon-balls, which were lavishly hurled at us, and soon our batteries began to bellow in answer. The infantry got orders to lie flat on the ground, and the enemy's balls at first did little execution ; however, as he kept inces-

santly advancing, the regiments erelong stood to their arms. The Archduke Generalissimo, with his staff, came galloping along, drew bridle in front of us; he gave his commands; looked down into the plain, where the French still kept advancing. You saw by his face that he heeded not danger or death, that he lived altogether in his work; his whole bearing had got a more impressive aspect, a loftier determination, full of joyous courage, which he seemed to diffuse round him; the soldiers looked at him with pride and trust, many voices saluted him. He had ridden a little on towards Baumersdorf, when an adjutant came galloping back, and cried: "Volunteers forward!" In an instant, almost the whole company of Captain Marais stept-out as volunteers: we fancied it was to storm the enemy's nearest battery, which was advancing through the corn-fields in front; and so, cheering with loud shout, we hastened down the declivity, when a second adjutant came in, with the order that we were but to occupy the Russbach, defend the passage of it, and not to fire till the enemy were quite close. Scattering ourselves into skirmishing order, behind willow-trunks and high corn, we waited with firelocks ready; covered against cannon-balls, but hit by musket-shots and howitzer-grenades, which the enemy sent in great numbers to our quarter. About an hour we waited here, in the incessant roar of the artillery, which shot both ways over our heads; with regret we soon remarked that the enemy's were superior, at least in number, and delivered twice as many shots as ours, which however was far better served; the more did we admire the active zeal and valorous endurance by which the unequal match was nevertheless maintained.

'The Emperor Napoleon meanwhile saw, with impatience, the day passing-on without a decisive result; he had calculated on striking the blow at once, and his great accumulated force was not to have directed itself all hitherward in vain. Rapidly he arranged his troops for storming. Marshal Bernadotte got orders to press forward, over Atterkla, towards Wagram; and, by taking this place, break the middle of the Austrian line. Two deep storming columns were at the same time to advance, on the right and left, from Baumersdorf over the Russbach; to scale the heights of the Austrian position, and sweep away the troops there. French infantry had, in the mean while, got up close to where we stood; we skirmishers were called back from the Russbach, and again went into the general line: along the whole extent of which a dreadful fire of musketry now began. This monstrous noise of the universal,

never-ceasing crack of shots, and still more, that of the infinite jingle of iron, in handling of more than twenty-thousand muskets all crowded together here, was the only new and entirely strange impression that I, in these my first experiences in war, could say I had got; all the rest was in part conformable to my preconceived notion, in part even below it: but everything, the thunder of artillery never so numerous, every noise I had heard or figured, was trifling, in comparison with this continuous storm-tumult of the small-arms, as we call them,—that weapon by which indeed our modern battles do chiefly become deadly.'

What boots it? Ensign Varnhagen and Generalissimo Archduke Karl are beaten; have to retreat in the best possible order. The sun of Wagram sets as that of Austerlitz had done; the war has to end in submission and marriage: and, as the great Atlantic tide-stream rushes into every creek and alters the current there, so for our Varnhagen too a new chapter opens,—the diplomatic one, in Paris first of all. Varnhagen's experiences *At the Court of Napoleon*, as one of his sections is headed, are extremely entertaining. They are tragical, comical, of mixed character; always dramatic, and vividly given. We have a grand Schwartzenberg Festival, and the Emperor himself, and all high persons present in grand gala; with music, light and crowned goblets; in a wooden pavilion, with upholstery and draperies: a rag of drapery flutters the wrong way athwart some waxlight, shrivels itself up in quick fire, kindles the other draperies, kindles the gums and woods, and all blazes into swift-choking ruin; a beautiful Princess Schwartzenberg, lost in the mad tumult, is found on the morrow as ashes amid the ashes! Then also there are *soirées* of Imperial notabilities; 'the gentlemen walking about in varied talk, wherein you detect a certain cautiousness; the ladies all solemnly ranged in their chairs, rather silent for ladies.' Berthier is a 'man of composure,' *not* without higher capabilities. Denon, in spite of his kind speeches, produces an ill effect on one; and in his *habit habillé*, with court-rapier and lace-cuffs, 'looks like a dizened ape.' Cardinal Maury in red stockings, he that was once Abbé Maury, 'pet son of the

scarlet-woman, whispers diplomatically in your ear, in passing, "*Nous avons beaucoup de joie de vous voir ici.*" But the thing that will best of all suit us here, is the presentation to Napoleon himself:

'On Sunday, the 22d of July (1810), was to be the Emperor's first levee after that fatal occurrence of the fire; and we were told it would be uncommonly fine and grand. In Berlin I had often accidentally seen Napoleon, and afterwards at Vienna and Schönbrunn; but always too far off for a right impression of him. At Prince Schwartzenberg's festival, the look of the man, in that whirl of horrible occurrences, had effaced itself again. I assume, therefore, that I saw him for the first time now, when I saw him *rightly*, near at hand, with convenience, and a sufficient length of time. The frequent opportunities I afterwards had, in the Tuileries and at Saint-Cloud (in the latter place especially, at the brilliant theatre, open only to the Emperor and his guests, where Talma, Fleury and La Raucourt figured), did but confirm, and, as it were, complete that first impression.

'We had driven to the Tuileries, and arrived through a great press of guards and people at a chamber, of which I had already heard, under the name of *Salle des Ambassadeurs*. The way in which, here in this narrow ill-furnished pen, so many high personages stood jammed together, had something ludicrous and insulting in it, and was indeed the material of many a Paris jest.—The richest uniforms and court-dresses were, with difficulty and anxiety, struggling hitherward and thitherward; intermixed with Imperial liveries of men handing refreshments, who always, by the near peril, suspended every motion of those about them. The talk was loud and vivacious on all sides; people seeking acquaintances, seeking more room, seeking better light. Seriousness of mood, and dignified concentration of oneself, seemed foreign to all; and what a man could not bring with him, there was nothing here to produce. The whole matter had a distressful, offensive air; you found yourself ill-off, and waited out of humour. My look, however, dwelt with especial pleasure on the members of our Austrian Embassy, whose bearing and demeanour did not discredit the dignity of the old Imperial house.—Prince Schwartzenberg, in particular, had a stately aspect; ease without negligence, gravity without assumption, and over all an honest goodness of expression; beautifully contrasted with

the smirking saloon-activity, the perked-up courtierism and pretentious nullity of many here. * * *

'At last the time came for going-up to audience. On the first announcement of it, all rushed without order towards the door; you squeezed along, you pushed and shoved your neighbour without ceremony. Chamberlains, pages and guards filled the passages and ante-chamber; restless, over-done officiousness struck you here too; the soldiers seemed the only figures that knew how to behave in their business,—and this, truly, they had learned, not at Court, but from their drill-sergeants.

'We had formed ourselves into a half-circle in the Audience Hall, and got placed in several crowded ranks, when the cry of "*L'Empereur!*" announced the appearance of Napoleon, who entered from the lower side of the apartment. In simple blue uniform, his little hat under his arm, he walked heavily towards us. His bearing seemed to me to express the contradiction between a will that would attain something, and a contempt for those by whom it was to be attained. An imposing appearance he would undoubtedly have liked to have; and yet it seemed to him not worth the trouble of acquiring; acquiring, I may say, for by nature he certainly had it not. Thus there alternated in his manner a negligence and a studiedness, which combined themselves only in unrest and dissatisfaction. He turned first to the Austrian Embassy, which occupied one extremity of the half-circle. The consequences of the unlucky festival gave occasion to various questions and remarks. The Emperor sought to appear sympathetic, he even used words of emotion; but this tone by no means succeeded with him, and accordingly he soon let it drop. To the Russian Ambassador, Kurakin, who stood next, his manner had already changed into a rougher; and in his farther progress some face or some thought must have stung him, for he got into violent anger; broke stormfully out on some one or other, not of the most important there, whose name has now escaped me; could be pacified with no answer, but demanded always new; rated and threatened, and held the poor man, for a good space, in tormenting annihilation. Those who stood nearer, and were looking at this scene, not without anxieties of their own, declared afterwards that there was no cause at all for such fury; that the Emperor had merely been seeking an opportunity to vent his ill-humour, and had done so even intentionally, on this poor wight, that

all the rest might be thrown into due terror, and every opposition beforehand beaten down.

'As he walked on, he again endeavoured to speak more mildly; but his jarred humour still sounded through. His words were short, hasty, as if shot from him, and on the most indifferent matters had a passionate rapidity; nay when he wished to be kindly, it still sounded as if he were in anger. Such a raspy, untamed voice as that of his I have hardly heard.

'His eyes were dark, overclouded, fixed on the ground before him; and only glanced backwards in side-looks now and then, swift and sharp, on the persons there. When he smiled, it was but the mouth and a part of the cheeks that smiled; brow and eyes remained gloomily motionless. If he constrained these also, as I have subsequently seen him do, his countenance took a still more distorted expression. This union of gloom and smile had something frightfully repulsive in it. I know not what to think of the people who have called this countenance gracious, and its kindliness attractive. Were not his features, though undeniably beautiful in the plastic sense, yet hard and rigorous like marble; foreign to all trust, incapable of any heartiness?

'What he said, whenever I heard him speaking, was always trivial both in purport and phraseology; without spirit, without wit, without force, nay, at times, quite poor and ridiculous. Faber, in his *Notices sur l'Interieur de la France*, has spoken expressly of his questions, those questions which Napoleon was wont to prepare beforehand for certain persons and occasions, to gain credit thereby for acuteness and special knowledge. This is literally true of a visit he had made a short while before to the great Library: all the way on the stairs, he kept calling out about that passage in Josephus where Jesus is made mention of; and seemed to have no other task here but that of showing-off this bit of learning; it had altogether the air of a question got by heart. * * * His gift lay in saying things sharp, or at least unpleasant; nay, when he wanted to speak in another sort, he often made no more of it than insignificance: thus it befell once, as I myself witnessed in Saint-Cloud, he went through a whole row of ladies, and repeated twenty times merely these three words, "*Il fait chaud.*" * * *

'At this time there circulated a song on his second marriage; a piece composed in the lowest popular tone, but which

doubtless had originated in the higher classes. Napoleon saw his power and splendour stained by a ballad, and breathed revenge ; but the police could no more detect the author than they could the circulators. To me among others a copy, written in a bad hand and without name, had been sent by the city-post ; I had privately with friends amused myself over the burlesque, and knew it by heart. Altogether at the wrong time, exactly as the Emperor, gloomy and sour of humour, was now passing me, the words and tune of that song came into my head ; and the more I strove to drive them back, the more decidedly they forced themselves forward ; so that my imagination, excited by the very frightfulness of the thing, was getting giddy, and seemed on the point of breaking-forth into the deadliest offence,—when happily the audience came to an end ; and deep repeated bows accompanied the exit of Napoleon ; who to me had addressed none of his words, but did, as he passed, turn on me one searching glance of the eye, with the departure of which it seemed as if a real danger had vanished.

'The Emperor gone, all breathed free, as if disloaded from a heavy burden. By degrees the company again grew loud, and then went over altogether into the noisy disorder and haste which had ruled at the commencement. The French courtiers, especially, took pains to redeem their late downbent and terrified bearing by a free jocularity now ; and even in descending the stairs there arose laughter and quizzing at the levee, the solemnity of which had ended here.'

Such was Varnhagen von Ense's presentation to Napoleon Bonaparte in the Palace of the Tuileries. What Varnhagen saw remains a possession for him and for us. The judgment he formed on what he saw, will—depend upon circumstances. For the eye of the intellect 'sees in all objects what it brought with it the means of seeing.' Napoleon is a man of the sort which Varnhagen elsewhere calls *daimonisch*, a 'dæmonic man ;' whose meaning or magnitude is not very measurable by men ; who, with his *ownness* of impulse and insight, with his mystery and strength, in a word, with his *originality* (if we will understand that), reaches down into the region of the perennial and primeval, of the inarticulate and unspeakable ; concerning whom innumerable things may be said, and

the right thing not said for a long while, or at all. We will leave him standing on his own basis, at present; bullying the hapless obscure functionary there; declaring to all the world the meteorological fact, *Il fait chaud.*

Varnhagen, as we see, has many things to write about; but the thing which beyond all others he rejoices to write about, and would gladly sacrifice all the rest to, is the memory of Rahel, his deceased wife. Mysterious indications have of late years flitted round us, concerning a certain Rahel, a kind of spiritual queen in Germany, who seems to have lived in familiar relation to most of the distinguished persons of that country in her time. Travellers to Germany, now a numerous set with us, ask you as they return from æsthetic capitals and circles, "Do you know Rahel?" Marquis Custine, in the *Revue de Paris* (treating of this Book of *Rahel's Letters*) says by experience: 'She was a woman as extraordinary as Madame de Staël, for her faculties of mind, for her abundance of ideas, her light of soul, and her goodness of heart: she had, moreover, what the author of *Corinne* did not pretend to, a disdain for oratory; she did not write. The silence of minds like hers is a force too. With more vanity, a person so superior would have sought to make a public for herself: but Rahel desired only friends. She spoke to communicate the life that was in her; never did she speak to be admired.' Goethe testifies that she is a 'right woman; with the strongest feelings I have ever seen, and the completest mastery of them.' Richter addresses her by the title *geflügelte*, 'winged one.' Such a Rahel might be worth knowing.

We find, on practical inquiry, that Rahel was of Berlin; by birth a Jewess, in easy, not affluent circumstances; who lived, mostly there, from 1771 to 1833. That her youth passed in studies, struggles, disappointed passions, sicknesses, and other sufferings and vivacities to which one of her excitable organisation was liable. That she was deep in many spiritual provinces, in Poetry, in Art, in Philosophy;—the first, for instance, or one of the first to recognise the significance of Goethe, and teach the Schlegels to do it. That she wrote nothing: but thought, did and spoke many things, which attracted notice,

admiration spreading wider and wider. That in 1814 she became the wife of Varnhagen ; the loved wife, though her age was forty-three, exceeding his by some twelve years or more, and she could never boast of beauty. That without beauty, without wealth, foreign celebrity, or any artificial nimbus whatsoever, she had grown in her silently progressive way to be the most distinguished woman in Berlin ; admired, partly worshipped by all manner of high persons, from Prince Louis of Prussia downwards ; making her mother's, and then her husband's house the centre of an altogether brilliant circle there. This is the 'social phenomenon of Rahel.' What farther could be readily done to understand such a social phenomenon we have endeavoured to do ; with what success the reader shall see.

First of all, we have looked at the portrait of Rahel given in these Volumes. It is a face full of thought, of affection and energy ; with no pretensions to beauty, yet lovable and attractive in a singular degree. The strong high brow and still eyes are full of contemplation ; the long upper lip (sign of genius, some say) protrudes itself to fashion a curved mouth, condemnable in academies, yet beautifully expressive of laughter and affection, of strong endurance, of noble silent scorn ; the whole countenance looking as with cheerful clearness through a world of great pain and disappointment ; one of those faces which the lady meant when she said : "But are not all beautiful faces ugly, then, to begin with ?" In the next place, we have read diligently whatsoever we could anywhere find written about Rahel ; and have to remark here that the things written about her, unlike some things written by her, are generally easy to read. Varnhagen's account of their intercourse ; of his first young feelings towards her, his long waiting, and final meeting of her in snowy weather under the Lindens, in company with a lady whom he knew ; his tremulous speaking to her there, the rapid progress of their intimacy ; and so onwards, to love, to marriage : all this is touching and beautiful ; a Petrarchan romance, and yet a reality withal.

Finally, we have read in these Three thick Volumes of Let-

ters,—till, in the Second thick Volume, the reading faculty unhappily broke down, and had to skip largely thenceforth, only diving here and there at a venture with considerable intervals! Such is the melancholy fact. It must be urged in defence that these Volumes are of the toughest reading; calculated, as we said, for Germany rather than for England or us. To be written with such indisputable marks of ability, nay of genius, of depth and sincerity, they are the heaviest business we perhaps ever met with. The truth is, they do not suit us at all. They are *subjective* letters, what the metaphysicians call subjective, not *objective;* the grand material of them is endless depicturing of moods, sensations, miseries, joys and lyrical conditions of the writer; no definite picture drawn, or rarely any, of persons, transactions or events which the writer stood amidst: a wrong material, as it seems to us. To what end, to what end? we always ask. Not by looking at itself, but by looking at things out of itself, and ascertaining and ruling these, shall the mind become known. 'One thing above all others,' says Goethe once; 'I have never *thought about Thinking.*' What a thrift of thinking-faculty there; thrift almost of itself equal to a fortune, in these days: '*habe nie ans Denken gedacht!*' But how much wastefuller still is it to *feel about Feeling!* One is wearied of that; the healthy soul avoids that. Thou shalt look outward, not inward. Gazing inward on one's own self,—why, this can drive one mad, like the Monks of Athos, if it last too long! Unprofitable writing this *subjective* sort does seem;—at all events, to the present reviewer, no reading is so insupportable. Nay, we ask, might not the world be entirely deluged by it, unless prohibited? Every mortal is a microcosm; to himself a *macro*cosm, or Universe large as Nature; universal Nature would barely hold what he *could* say about himself. Not a dyspeptic tailor on any shopboard of this city but could furnish all England, the year through, with reading about himself, about his emotions and internal mysteries of woe and sensibility, if England would read him. It is a course which leads nowhither; a course which should be avoided.

Add to all this, that such self-utterance on the part of Rahel, in these Letters, is in the highest degree vaporous, vague.

Her very mode of writing is complex, nay is careless, incondite; with dashes and splashes, with notes of admiration, of interrogation (nay, both together sometimes), with involutions, abruptness, whirls and tortuosities; so that even the grammatical meaning is altogether burdensome to seize. And then when seized, alas, it is as we say, of due likeness to the phraseology; a thing crude, not articulated into propositions, but flowing out as in bursts of interjection and exclamation. No wonder the reading faculty breaks down! And yet we do gather gold grains of precious thought here and there; though out of large wastes of sand and quicksand. In fine, it becomes clear, beyond doubting, both that this Rahel was a woman of rare gifts and worth, a woman of true genius; and also that her genius has passed away, and left no impress of itself there for us. These printed Volumes produce the effect not of speech, but of multifarious, confused wind-music. It seems to require the aid of pantomime, to tell us what it means. But after all, we can understand how *talk* of that kind, in an expressive mouth, with bright deep eyes, and the vivacity of social movement, of question and response, may have been delightful; and moreover that, for those to whom they vividly recall such talk, these Letters may still be delightful. Hear Marquis de Custine a little farther:

'You could not speak with her, a quarter of an hour, without drawing from that fountain of light a shower of sparkles. The comic was at her command equally with the highest degree of the sublime. The proof that she was natural is that she understood laughter as she did grief; she took it as a readier means of showing truth; all had its resonance in her, and her manner of receiving the impressions which you wished to communicate to her modified them in yourself: you loved her at first because she had admirable gifts; and then, what prevailed over everything, because she was entertaining. She was nothing for you, or she was all; and she could be all to several at a time without exciting jealousy, so much did her noble nature participate in the source of all life, of all clearness. When one has lost in youth such a friend,' &c. &c. . . . . 'It seems to me you might define her in one word: she had the head of a sage and the heart of an apostle,

and in spite of that, she was a child and a woman as much as any one can be. Her mind penetrated into the obscurest depths of Nature; she was a thinker of as much and more clearness than our Theosophist Saint-Martin, whom she comprehended and admired; and she felt like an artist. Her perceptions were always double; she attained the sublimest truths by two faculties which are incompatible in ordinary men, by feeling and by reflection. Her friends asked of themselves, Whence came these flashes of genius which she threw from her in conversation? Was it the effect of long studies? Was it the effect of sudden inspiration? It was the intuition granted as recompense by Heaven to souls that are true. These martyr souls wrestle for the truth, which they have a forecast of; they suffer for the God whom they love, and their whole life is the school of eternity.'[1]

This enthusiastic testimony of the clever sentimental Marquis is not at all incredible to us, in its way: yet from these Letters we have nothing whatever to produce that were adequate to make it good. As was said already, it is not to be made good by excerpts and written documents; its proof rests in the memory of living witnesses. Meanwhile, from these same wastes of sand, and even of quicksand, dangerous to linger in, we will try to gather a few grains the most like gold, that it may be guessed, by the charitable, whether or not a Pactolus once flowed there:

'If there be miracles, they are those that are in our own breast; what we do not know, we call by that name. How astonished, almost how ashamed are we, when the inspired moment comes, and we get to know them!'

'One is late in learning to lie: and late in learning to speak the truth'—'I cannot, because I cannot lie. Fancy not that I take credit for it: I cannot, just as one cannot play upon the flute.'

'In the meanest hut is a romance, if you knew the hearts there.'

'So long as we do not take even the injustice which is done us, and which forces the burning tears from us; so long as we do not take even this for just and right, we are in the thickest darkness, without dawn.'

[1] *Revue de Paris*, Novembre 1837.

'Manure with despair,—but let it be genuine ; and you will have a noble harvest.'

'True misery is ashamed of itself ; hides itself, and does not complain. You may know it by that.'

'What a commonplace man ! If he did not live in the same time with us, no mortal would mention him.'

'Have you remarked that Homer, whenever he speaks of the water, is always great ; as Goethe is, when he speaks of the stars ?'

'If one were to say, "You think it easy to be original : but no, it is difficult, it costs a whole life of labour and exertion," —you would think him mad, and ask no more questions of him. And yet his opinion would be altogether true, and plain enough withal. Original, I grant, every man might be, and must be, if men did not almost always admit mere undigested hearsays into their head, and fling them out again undigested. Whoever honestly questions himself, and faithfully answers, is busied continually with all that presents itself in life ; and is incessantly inventing, had the thing been invented never so long before. Honesty belongs as a first condition to good thinking ; and there are almost as few absolute dunces as geniuses. Genuine dunces would always be original ; but there are none of them genuine : they have almost always understanding enough to be dishonest.'

'He (the blockhead) tumbled out on me his definition of genius : the trivial old distinctions of intellect and heart ; as if there ever was, or could be, a great intellect with a mean heart!'

'Goethe ? When I think of *him*, tears come into my eyes : all other men I love with my own strength ; he teaches me to love with his. My Poet!'

'Slave-trade, war, marriage, working-classes :—and they are astonished, and keep clouting, and remending ?'

'The whole world is, properly speaking, a tragic *embarras*.'

'. . . . . I here, Rahel the Jewess, feel that I am as unique as the greatest appearance in this earth. The greatest artist, philosopher, or poet, is not above me. We are of the same element : in the same rank, and stand together. Whichever would exclude the other, excludes only himself. But to me it was appointed not to write or act, but *to live:* I lay in embryo till my century ; and then was, in outward respects, so *flung away*.—It is for this reason that I tell you. But pain, as I know it, is a life too : and I think with myself, I am one of those figures which Humanity was fated to evolve, and

then never to use more, never to have more: me no one can comfort.'—'Why *not* be beside oneself, dear friend? There are beautiful parentheses in life, which belong neither to us nor to others: beautiful I name them, because they give us a freedom we could not get by sound sense. Who would volunteer to have a nervous fever? And yet it may save one's life. I love rage; I use it, and patronise it.'—'Be not alarmed; I am commonly calmer. But when I write to a *friend's heart*, it comes to pass that the sultry laden horizon of my soul breaks out in lightning. Heavenly men *love* lightning.'

'*To Varnhagen* . . . . . One thing I must write to thee; what I thought of last night in bed, and for the first time in my life. That I, as a relative and pupil of Shakspeare, have, from my childhood upwards, occupied myself much with death, thou mayest believe. But never did my own death affect me; nay, I did not even think of this fact, that I was not affected by it. Now, last night there was something I had to write; I said, Varnhagen must know this thing, if he is to think of me after I am dead. And it seemed to me as if I must die; as if my heart were flitting-away over this earth, and I must follow it; and my death gave me pity: for never before, as I now saw, had I thought that it would give anybody pity: of thee I knew it would do so, and yet it was the first time in my life I had seen this, or known that I had never seen it. In such solitude have I lived: comprehend it! I thought, When I am dead, then first will Varnhagen know what sufferings I had; and all his lamenting will be in vain; the figure of me meets him again, through all eternity, no more; swept away am I *then*, as our poor Prince Louis is. And no one can be kind to me then; with the strongest will, with the effort of despair, no one; and this thought of thee about me was what at last affected me. I must write of this, though it afflict thee never so.' . . . . .

'*To Rose, a younger sister, on her marriage in Amsterdam.*—Paris, 1801. . . . . Since thy last letter I am sore downcast. Gone art thou! No Rose comes stepping-in to me with true foot and heart, who knows me altogether, knows all my sorrows *altogether*. When I am sick of body or soul, alone, alone, thou comest not to me any more; thy room empty, quite empty, forever empty. Thou art away, to try thy fortune. O Heaven! and to me not even *trying* is permitted. Am not *I* in luck! The garden in the Lindenstrasse, where we used to be with Hanne and Feu—was it not beautiful?—I will call it *Rose* now; with Hanne and Hanse will I go often

thither, and none shall know of it. Dost thou recollect that night when I was to set out with Fink, the time before last? How thou hadst to sleep up-stairs, and then to stay with me? O my sister, I might be as ill again—though not for that cause: and thou too, what may not lie before thee! But no, thy name is Rose: thou hast *blue* eyes, and a far other life than I with my stars and black ones. * * * Salute Mamma a million times; tell her I congratulate her from the heart; the more so, as *I* can never give her such a pleasure! God willed it not. But I, in her place, would have great pity for a child so circumstanced. Yet let her not lament for me. I know all her goodness and thank her with my soul. Tell her I have the fate of nations, and of the greatest men, before my eyes here: they too go tumbling even so on the great sea of Existence, mounting, sinking, swallowed up. From of *old* all men have seemed to me like spring blossoms, which the wind blows off and whirls; none knows where they fall, and the fewest come to fruit.'

Poor Rahel! The Frenchman said above, she was an artist and apostle, yet had not ceased to be a child and woman. But we must stop short. One other little scene, a scene from her death-bed by Varnhagen, must end the tragedy:

'. . . . . She said to me one morning, after a dreadful night, with the penetrating tone of that lovely voice of hers: "Oh, I am *still* happy; I am God's creature still; He knows of me; I shall come to see how it was good and needful for me to suffer: of a surety I had something to learn by it. And am I not already happy in this trust, and in all the love that I feel and meet with?"

'In this manner she spoke, one day, among other things, with joyful heartiness, of a dream which always from childhood she had remembered and taken comfort from. "In my seventh year," said she, "I dreamt that I saw God quite near me; he stood expanded above me, and his mantle was the whole sky; on a corner of this mantle I had leave to rest, and lay there in peaceable felicity till I awoke. Ever since, through my whole life, this dream has returned on me, and in the worst times was present also in my waking moments, and a heavenly comfort to me. I had leave to throw myself at God's feet, on a corner of his mantle, and he screened me from all

sorrow there: He permitted it." * * * The following words, which I felt called to write down exactly as she spoke them on the 2d of March, are also remarkable: "What a history!" cried she, with deep emotion: "A fugitive from Egypt and Palestine am I here; and find help, love and kind care among you. To thee, dear August, was I sent by this guiding of God, and thou to me; from afar, from the old times of Jacob and the Patriarchs! With a sacred joy I think of this my origin, of all this wide web of pre-arrangement. How the oldest remembrances of mankind are united with the newest reality of things, and the most distant times and places are brought together. What, for so long a period of my life, I considered as the worst ignominy, the sorest sorrow and misfortune, that I was born a Jewess, this I would not part with now for any price. Will it not be even so with these pains of sickness? Shall I not, one day, mount joyfully aloft on them too; feel that I could not want them for any price? O August, this is just, this is true; we will try to go on thus!" Thereupon she said, with many tears, "Dear August, my heart is refreshed to its inmost: I have thought of Jesus, and wept over his sorrows; I have felt, for the first time felt, that he is my brother. And Mary, what must not she have suffered! She saw her beloved Son in agony, and did not sink; she *stood* at the Cross. That I could not have done; I am not strong enough for that. Forgive me, God, I confess how weak I am." * * *

'At nightfall, on the 6th of March, Rahel felt herself easier than for long before, and expressed an irresistible desire to be new dressed. As she could not be persuaded from it, this was done, though with the greatest precaution. She herself was busily helpful in it, and signified great contentment that she had got it accomplished. She felt so well she expected to sleep. She wished me good-night, and bade me also go and sleep. Even the maid, Dora, was to go and sleep; however, she did not.

'It might be about midnight, and I was still awake, when Dora called me: "I was to come, she was much worse." Instead of sleep, Rahel had found only suffering, one distress added to another; and now all had combined into decided spasm of the breast. I found her in a state little short of that she had passed six days ago. The medicines left for such an occurrence (regarded as possible, not probable) were tried: but, this time, with little effect. The frightful struggle continued; and the beloved sufferer, writhing in Dora's arms,

cried, several times, "This pressure against her breast was not to be borne, was crushing her heart out:" the breathing, too, was painfully difficult. She complained that "it was getting into her head now, that she felt like a cloud there;" she leaned back with that. A deceptive hope of some alleviation gleamed on us for a moment, and then went out forever; the eyes were dimmed, the mouth distorted, the limbs lamed! In this state the Doctors found her; their remedies were all bootless. An unconscious hour and half, during which the breast still occasionally struggled in spasmodic efforts,—and this noble life breathed-out its last. The sight I saw then, while kneeling almost lifeless at her bed, stamped itself glowing forever into my heart.'

So died Rahel Varnhagen von Ense, born Levin, a singular biographic phenomenon of this century; a woman of genius, of true depth and worth; whose secluded life, as one cannot but see, had in it a greatness far beyond what has many times fixed the public admiration of the whole world; a woman equal to the highest thoughts of her century; in whom it was not arrogance, we do believe, but a just self-consciousness, to feel that 'the highest philosopher, or poet, or artist was not above her, but of a like element and rank 'with her.' That such a woman should have lived unknown and, as it were, silent to the world, is peculiar in this time.

We say not that she was equal to De Staël, nor the contrary; neither that she might have written De Staël's books, nor even that she might not have written far better books. She has ideas unequalled in De Staël; a sincerity, a pure tenderness and genuineness which that celebrated person had not, or had lost. But what then? The subjunctive, the optative are vague moods: there is no tense one can found on but the preterite of the indicative. Enough for us, Rahel did not write. She sat imprisoned, or it might be sheltered and fosteringly embowered, in those circumstances of hers; she 'was not appointed to write or to act, but only to live.' Call her not unhappy on that account, call her not useless; nay, perhaps, call her happier and usefuller. Blessed are the humble, are they that are *not* known. It is written, 'Seekest thou great things, seek them not:' live where thou

art, only live wisely, live diligently. Rahel's life was not an idle one for herself or for others: how many souls may the 'sparkles showering from that light-fountain' have kindled and illuminated; whose new virtue goes on propagating itself, increasing itself, under incalculable combinations, and will be found in far places, after many days! She left no stamp of herself on paper; but in other ways, doubt it not, the virtue of her working in this world will survive all paper. For the working of the good and brave, seen or unseen, endures literally forever, and cannot die. Is a thing nothing because the Morning Papers have not mentioned it? Or can a nothing be made something, by never so much babbling of it there? Far better, probably, that no Morning or Evening Paper mentioned it; that the right hand knew not what the left was doing! Rahel might have written books, celebrated books. And yet, what of books? Hast thou not already a Bible to write, and publish in print that is eternal; namely, a Life to lead? Silence too is great: there should be great silent ones too.

Beautiful it is to see and understand that no worth, known or unknown, *can* die even in this earth. The work an unknown good man has done is like a vein of water flowing hidden underground, secretly making the ground green; it flows and flows, it joins itself with other veins and veinlets; one day, it will start forth as a visible perennial well. Ten dumb centuries had made the speaking Dante; a well he of many veinlets. William Burnes, or Burns, was a poor peasant; could not prosper in his 'seven acres of nursery-ground,' nor any enterprise of trade and toil; had to 'thole a factor's snash,' and read attorney-letters, in his poor hut, 'which threw us all into tears:' a man of no money-capital at all, of no account at all: yet a brave man, a wise and just, in evil fortune faithful, unconquerable to the death. And there wept withal among the others a boy named *Robert*, with a heart of melting pity, of greatness and fiery wrath; and *his* voice, fashioned here by this poor father, does it not already reach, like a great elegy, like a stern prophecy, to the ends of the world? 'Let me make the songs, and you shall make the laws!' What

chancellor, king, senator, begirt with never such sumptuosity, dyed velvet, blaring and celebrity, could you have named in England that was so momentous as that William Burns? Courage !—

We take leave of Varnhagen with true goodwill, and heartily thank him for the pleasure and instruction he has given us.

PETITION ON THE COPYRIGHT BILL.

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PETITION ON THE COPYRIGHT BILL.

Assuring to each man the just recompense of his labour, the business of all Legislation and Government among men. To have written a genuine enduring book, not a sufficient reason for the forfeiture of the Law's protection. Why then should extraneous persons be allowed to steal from the poor book-writer the poor market-price of his labours ? (p. 133).

PETITION ON THE COPYRIGHT BILL.[1]

[1839.]

To the Honourable the Commons of England in Parliament assembled, the Petition of Thomas Carlyle, a Writer of Books,

Humbly showeth,

That your petitioner has written certain books, being incited thereto by various innocent or laudable considerations, chiefly by the thought that said books might in the end be found to be worth something.

That your petitioner had not the happiness to receive from Mr. Thomas Tegg, or any Publisher, Republisher, Printer, Bookseller, Bookbuyer, or other the like man, or body of men, any encouragement or countenance in writing of said books, or to discern any chance of receiving such; but wrote them by effort of his own and the favour of Heaven.

That all useful labour is worthy of recompense; that all honest labour is worthy of the chance of recompense; that the giving and assuring to each man what recompense his labour has actually merited, may be said to be the business of all Legislation, Polity, Government and Social Arrangement whatsoever among men;—a business indispensable to attempt, impossible to accomplish accurately, difficult to accomplish without inaccuracies that become enormous, insupportable, and the parent of Social Confusions which never altogether end.

That your petitioner does not undertake to say what recompense in money this labour of his may deserve; whether it deserves any recompense in money, or whether money in any quantity could hire him to do the like.

That this his labour has found hitherto, in money or

[1] The EXAMINER, April 7, 1839.

money's worth, small recompense or none ; that he is by no means sure of its ever finding recompense, but thinks that, if so, it will be at a distant time, when he, the labourer, will probably no longer be in need of money, and those dear to him will still be in need of it.

That the law does at least protect all persons in selling the production of their labour at what they can get for it, in all market-places, to all lengths of time. Much more than this the law does to many, but so much it does to all, and less than this to none.

That your petitioner cannot discover himself to have done unlawfully in this his said labour of writing books, or to have become criminal, or have forfeited the law's protection thereby. Contrariwise your petitioner believes firmly that he is innocent in said labour ; that if he be found in the long-run to have written a genuine enduring book, his merit therein, and desert towards England and English and other men, will be considerable, not easily estimable in money ; that on the other hand, if his book proves false and ephemeral, he and it will be abolished and forgotten, and no harm done.

That, in this manner, your petitioner plays no unfair game against the world ; his stake being life itself, so to speak (for the penalty is death by starvation), and the world's stake nothing till once it see the dice thrown ; so that in any case the world cannot lose.

That, in the happy and long-doubtful event of the game's going in his favour, your petitioner submits that the small winnings thereof do belong to him or his, and that no other mortal has justly either part or lot in them at all, now, henceforth, or forever.

May it therefore please your Honourable House to protect him in said happy and long-doubtful event ; and (by passing your Copyright Bill) forbid all Thomas Teggs and other extraneous persons, entirely unconcerned in this adventure of his, to steal from him his small winnings, for a space of sixty years at shortest. After sixty years, unless your Honourable House provide otherwise, they may begin to steal.

And your petitioner will ever pray. THOMAS CARLYLE.

ON THE SINKING OF THE VENGEUR.

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ON THE SINKING OF THE VENGEUR.

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ON THE SINKING OF THE VENGEUR.[1]

[1839.]

TO OLIVER YORKE, ESQ.

DEAR YORKE,—Shall we now overhaul that story of the *Sinking of the Vengeur*, a little; and let a discerning public judge of the same? I will endeavour to begin at the beginning, and not to end till I have got to some conclusion. As many readers are probably in the dark, and young persons may not have so much as heard of the *Vengeur*, we had perhaps better take-up the matter *ab ovo*, and study to carry uninstructed mankind confortably along with us *ad mala*.

I find, therefore, worthy Yorke, in searching through old files of newspapers, and other musty articles, as I have been obliged to do, that on the evening of the 10th of June 1794, a brilliant audience was, as often happens, assembled at the Opera House here in London. Radiance of various kinds, and melody of fiddlestrings and windpipes, cartilaginous or metallic, was filling all the place,—when an unknown individual entered with a wet Newspaper in his pocket, and tidings that Lord Howe and the English fleet had come-up with Villaret-Joyeuse and the French, off the coast of Brest, and gained a signal victory over him.[2] The agitation spread from bench to bench, from box to box; so that the wet Newspaper had finally to be read from the stage, and all the musical instruments, human and other, had to strike-up *Rule Britannia*, the brilliant audience all standing, and such of them as had talent joining in chorus,—before the usual *squallacci* melody, natural

[1] FRASER'S MAGAZINE, No. 115. [2] *Morning Chronicle* of June 1794.

to the place, could be allowed to proceed again. This was the first intimation men had of Howe's victory of the 1st of June ; on the following evening London was illuminated : the *Gazette* had been published,—some six ships taken, and a seventh, named *Vengeur*, which had been sunk : a very glorious victory : and the joy of people's minds was considerable.

For the remainder of that month of June 1794, and over into July, the Newspapers enliven themselves with the usual succession of despatches, private narratives, anecdotes, commentaries and rectifications ; unfolding gradually, as their way is, how the matter has actually passed ; till each reader may form some tolerably complete image of it, till each at least has had enough of it ; and the glorious victory submerges in the general flood, giving place to other glories. Of the Vengeur that sank, there want not anecdotes, though they are not of a very prominent kind. The Vengeur, it seems, was engaged with the *Brunswick ;* the Brunswick had stuck close to her, and the fight was very hot ; indeed, the two ships were hooked together by the Brunswick's anchors, and stuck so till the Vengeur had got enough ; but the anchors at last gave way, and the Brunswick, herself much disabled, drifted to leeward of the enemy's flying ships, and had to run before the wind, and so escape them. The Vengeur, entirely powerless, was taken possession of by the *Alfred*, by the *Culloden*, or by both of them together ; and sank after not many minutes. All this is in the English Newspapers ; this, so far as we are concerned, is the English version of Howe's victory,—in which the sinking Vengeur is noticeable, but plays no pre-eminently distinguished part.

The same English Newspapers publish, as they receive them, generally without any commentary whatever, the successive French versions of the matter ; the same that can now be read more conveniently, in their original language, in the *Choix des Rapports*, vol. xiv., and elsewhere. The French Convention was now sitting, in its Reign of Terror, fighting for life and death, with all weapons, against all men. The French Convention had of course to give its own version of this matter, the best it could. Barrère was the man to do that. On

the 15th of June, accordingly, Barrère reports that it is a glorious victory *for France;* that the fight, indeed, was sharp, and not unattended with loss, the *ennemis du genre humain* being *acharnés* against us; but that, nevertheless, these gallant French war-ships did so shatter and astonish the enemy on this 1st of June and the preceding days, that the enemy shore-off; and, on the morrow, our invaluable American cargo of naval stores, safely stowed in the fleet of transport-ships, got safe through;—which latter statement is a fact, the transport-ships having actually escaped unmolested; they sailed over the very place of battle, saw the wreck of burnt and shattered things, still tumbling on the waters, and knew that a battle had been. By degrees, however, it becomes impossible to conceal that the glorious victory for France has yielded six captured ships of war to the English, and one to the briny maw of Ocean; that, in short, the glorious victory has been what in unofficial language is called a sheer defeat. Whereupon, after some recriminating and flourishing from Jean-Bon Saint-André and others, how the captain of the *Jacobin* behaved ill, and various men and things behaved ill, conspiring to tarnish the laurels of the Republic,—Barrère adroitly takes a new tack; will show that if we French did not beat, we did better, and are a spectacle for the very gods. Fixing on the sunk Vengeur, Barrère publishes his famed *Rapport du* 21 *Messidor* (9th July 1794), setting forth how Republican valour, conquered by unjust fortune, did nevertheless in dying earn a glory that will never die, but flame there forever, as a symbol and prophecy of victories without end: how the Vengeur, in short, being entirely disabled, and incapable of commonplace flight, flew desperate, and refused to strike, though sinking; how the enemies fired on her, but she returned their fire, shot aloft all her tricolor streamers, shouted *Vive la République;* nay, fired the guns of her upper deck, when the lower decks were already sunk; and so, in this mad whirlwind of fire and shouting, and invincible despair, went down into the ocean-depths; *Vive la République,* and a universal volley from the upper deck, being the last sounds she made. This Report too is translated accurately,

in the *Morning Chronicle* for July 26, 1794 ; and published without the smallest commentary there. The Vengeur with all her crew being down in the depths of ocean, it is not of course they that can vouch for this heroic feat ; neither is it the other French, who had all fled by that time : no, the testimony is still more indubitable, that of our enemies themselves ; it is 'from the English Newspapers' that Barrère professes to have gathered these heart-inspiring details, the candour even of these *ennemis acharnés* could not conceal them,—which, therefore, let all Frenchmen believe as a degree truer than truth itself, and rejoice in accordingly. To all this, as was said, the English Newspapers seem to have made no reply whatever.

The French, justly proud of so heroic a feat, a degree truer than truth itself, did make, and have ever since continued to make, what demonstration was fit. Convention decree, Convention decrees were solemnly passed about this suicidal Vengeur ; the deathless suicidal Vengeur is written deep in innumerable French songs and psalmodyings ; a wooden *Model of the Vengeur*, solemnly consecrated in the Pantheon of Great Men, beckoned figuratively from its peg, '*Aux grands hommes, la patrie reconnaissante !*'—and hangs there, or in the *Musée Naval*, beckoning, I believe, at this hour. In an age of miracles, such as the Reign of Terror, one knows not at first view *what* is incredible : such loud universal proclamation, and the silence of the English (little interested, indeed, to deny), seem to have produced an almost universal belief both in France and here. Doubts, I now find, were more than once started by sceptics even among the French,—in a suitable low tone ; but the 'solemn Convention decrees,' the wooden '*Modèle du Vengeur*' hanging visible there, the 'glory of France?' Such doubts were instantly blown away again ; and the heroic feat, like a mirror-shadow wiped, not wiped *out*, remained only the clearer for them.

Very many years ago, in some worthless English History of the French Revolution, the first that had come in my way, I read this incident ; coldly recorded, without controversy, without favor or feud ; and, naturally enough, it *burnt* itself

indelibly into the boyish imagination ; and indeed is, with the murder of the Princess de Lamballe, all that I now remember of that same worthless English History. Coming afterwards to write of the French Revolution myself ; finding this story so solemnly authenticated, and not knowing that, in its intrinsic character, it had ever been so much as questioned, I wrote it down nothing doubting : as other English writers had done ; the fruit of which, happily now got to maturity so far as I am concerned, you are here to see ripen itself, by the following stages. Take first the *corpus delicti :*

1. *Extract from Carlyle's 'French Revolution.'* [1]

'But how is it, then, with that *Vengeur* Ship, she neither strikes nor makes-off? She is lamed, she cannot make-off; strike she will not. Fire rakes her fore and aft from victorious enemies ; the Vengeur is sinking. Strong are ye, Tyrants of the sea ; yet we also, are we weak? Lo ! all flags, streamers, jacks, every rag of tricolor that will yet run on rope, fly rustling aloft ; the whole crew crowds to the upper deck ; and with universal soul-maddening yell, shouts *Vive la Rêpublique,*—sinking, sinking. She staggers, she lurches, her last drunk whirl ; Ocean yawns abysmal : down rushes the Vengeur, carrying *Vive la République* along with her, unconquerable, into eternity.'

2. *Letter from Rear-Admiral Griffiths, in the 'Sun' Newspaper of — Nov.* 1838.

'Mr. Editor,—Since the period of Lord Howe's victory, on 1st June 1794, the story of the *Vengeur* French 74-gun ship going down, with colours flying, and her crew crying *Vive la République, Vive la Liberté,* &c., and the further absurdity that they continued firing the maindeck guns after her lower deck was immersed, has been declared, and has recently been reasserted by a French author. It originated, no doubt, on the part of the French, in political and exciting motives, —precisely as Bonaparte caused his victory at Trafalgar to be promulgated through France. While these reports and confident assertions were confined to our neighbors, it seemed

[1] Vol. ii. 313; London, 1857.

little worth the while to contradict it. But now, when two English authors of celebrity, Mr. Alison, in his *History of Europe during the French Revolution*, and Mr. Carlyle, in his similar work, give it the confirmation of English authority, I consider it right thus to declare that the whole story is a ridiculous piece of nonsense. At the time the Vengeur sunk, the action had ceased some time. The French fleet were making-off before the wind; and Captain Renaudin and his son had been nearly half-an-hour prisoners on board H. M. S. Culloden, of which ship I was the fourth lieutenant: and about 127 of the crew were also prisoners, either on board the Culloden or in her boats, besides I believe 100 in the Alfred's, and some 40 in the hired cutter, commanded by Lieutenant (the late Rear-Admiral) Winne. The Vengeur was taken possession of by the boats of the Culloden, Lieutenant Rotheram, and the Alfred, Lieutenant Deschamps; and Captain Renaudin and myself, who were by Captain Schomberg's desire at lunch in his cabin, hearing the cries of distress, ran to the starboard quarter gallery, and thence witnessed the melancholy scene. Never were men in distress more ready to save themselves. A. J. Griffiths.'

This Letter, which appeared in the *Sun* Newspaper early in November last, was copied into most of the other Newspapers in the following days; I take it from the *Examiner* of next Sunday (18th Nov. 1838). The result seemed to be general uncertainty. On me, who had not the honour at that time to know Admiral Griffiths even by name, still less by character, the main impression his letter left was that this affair was singular, doubtful; that it would require to be farther examined by the earliest opportunity. Not long after, a friend of his, who took an interest in it, and was known to friends of mine, transmitted me through them the following new Document, which it appeared had been written earlier though without a view to publication:

3. *Letter from Rear-Admiral Griffiths to a private Friend* (penes me).

'Since you request it, I send you the state of the actual fact as respects the sinking of the Vengeur *after* the action of the 1st June 1794.

'I was fourth lieutenant in the Culloden in that action. Mr. Carlyle, in his *History of the French Revolution*, vol. iii. p. 335, gives, in his own peculiar style, the same account of it that was published to the world under the influence of the French Government, for political and exciting purposes; and which has recently been reiterated by a French author. Mr. Carlyle, in adopting these authorities, has given *English* testimony to the farce; farce I call it,—for, with the exception of the Vengeur "sinking," there is not *one* word of fact in the narration. I will first review it in detail:—

'"The Vengeur neither strikes nor makes-off." She *did both*. She made-off as well as her disabled state admitted, and was actually taken in tow by a French eighteen-gun brig; which cast her off, on the Culloden, Alfred and two or three others, approaching to take possession of her. "Fire rakes her fore and aft from victorious enemies." Wicked indeed would it have been to have fired into her, a sinking ship with colours down; and I can positively assert not *a* gun was fired at her for an hour before she was taken possession of. "The Vengeur is sinking." True. "Lo! all flags, streamers, jacks, every rag of tricolour that will yet run on rope fly rustling aloft." Not one mast standing, not ONE *rope* on which to hoist or display a bit of tricolor, not one flag, or streamer, or ensign displayed; her colours down; and, *for more* than half an hour before she sunk, Captain Renaudin, and his son, &c., *prisoners on board the Culloden*,—on which I will by and by more especially particularise. "The whole crew crowds to the upper deck; and, with universal soul-maddening yell, shouts *Vive la République!*" Beyond the fact of the crew (except the wounded) being on the upper deck, not even the slightest, the most trivial semblance of truth. Not one shout beyond that of horror and despair. At the moment of her sinking, we had *on board* the Culloden, and in our boats then at the wreck, 127 of her crew, including the captain. The Alfred had many; I *believe about* 100: Lieutenant Winne, in command of a hired cutter, a number; I *think*, 49. "Down rushes the Vengeur, carrying *Vive la République* along with her, unconquerable, into Eternity." Bah! answered above.

'I have thus reviewed Mr. Carlyle's statement; I now add the particulars of the fact. The Vengeur totally dismasted, going off before the wind, under her sprit-sail, &c.; five sail of the line come up with her, the Culloden and Alfred two of these. Her colours down, Lieutenant Richard Deschamps, first of the Alfred, I believe, took possession of her. The next

boat on board was the Culloden's, Lieutenant Rotheram, who died one of the Captains of Greenwich Hospital. Deschamps went up the side. Rotheram got-in at the lower-deck port, saw that the ship was sinking, and went thence to the quarter-deck. I am not positive which boat got first on board. Rotheram returned with Captain Renaudin, his son, and one man; and reported her state, whereupon other boats were sent. The Vengeur's mainyard was lying across her decks; Rotheram, &c., descended from its larboard yard-arm by the yard-tackle pendant; and I personally heard him report to Captain Schomberg the Vengeur's state, "That he could not place a two-feet rule in any direction, he thought, that would not touch two shot-holes." Except the Purser, Mr. Oliver, who was engaged in arranging the prisoners in classes, &c. as they came on board, I was the only officer who knew any French, and mine very so-so. Captain Schomberg said: "You understand French; take Renaudin and his son into the cabin, and divert his mind from attention to his ship while sinking." Having been in presence of the French fleet for three days prior to the action, the accustomed cooking had not gone on; the galley-fire was little lighted. But the Captain, foreseeing, had a cold mutton-pie standing by; this, with wine, was ordered for us; and I was actually eating it with Renaudin, a prisoner in Captain Schomberg's cabin, when a bustle on deck made us start up; we ran to the starboard quarter-gallery, and saw the Vengeur, then say a stone's-throw from us, sink. These are the facts.

'*Sept.* 17, 1838. A. J. Griffiths.

'I have said, I am not certain which boat took possession; and I gave it to the Alfred, because there arises so much silly squabbling on these trifles. But from Rotheram taking the Captain, it seems probable the Culloden's boat was first. A matter, however, of no moment.'

Such a Document as this was not of a sort to be left dormant: doubt could not sleep on *it;* doubt, unless effectually contradicted, had no refuge but to hasten to denial. I immediately did two things: I applied to Admiral Griffiths for leave to publish this new letter, or such portions of it as might seem needful; and at the same time I addressed myself to a distinguished French friend, well acquainted with these matters, more zealously concerned in them than almost any other

living man, and hitherto an undoubting believer in the history of the Vengeur. This was my Letter to him, marked here as Document No. 4:

4. *Letter of T. Carlyle to Monsieur ——.*

'My dear —— ——, —Enclosed herewith are copies of Admiral Griffiths's two Letters concerning the Vengeur, on which we communicated lately. You undertook the French side of the business; you are become, so to speak, advocate of France in this matter; as I for my share am put into the post of advocate for England. In the interest of all men, so far as that can be concerned here, the truth ought to be known, and recognised by all.

'Having read the story in some English book in boyhood, naturally with indelible impression of it; reading the same afterwards with all detail in the *Choix des Rapports*, and elsewhere; and finding it everywhere acted upon as authentic, and nowhere called in question, I wrote it down in my Book with due energy and sympathy, as a fact forever memorable. But now, I am bound to say, the Rear-Admiral has altogether altered the footing it stands on; and except other evidence than I yet have, or know where to procure, be adduced, I must give-up the business as a cunningly devised fable, and in my next edition contradict it with as much energy as I asserted it. *You* know with how much reluctance that will be; for what man, indeed, would not wish to believe it?

'But what can I do? Barrère's *Rapport* does not even profess to be grounded on any evidence except what "the English Newspapers" afforded him. I have looked into various "English Newspapers;" the *Morning Chronicle*, the Opposition or "Jacobin" journal of that period, I have examined minutely from the beginning of June to the end of July 1794, through all the stages of the business; and found there no trace or hint of what Barrère asserts: I do not think there is any hint of it discoverable in any English Newspaper of those weeks. What Barrère's *own* authority was worth in such cases, we all know. On the other hand, here is an eye-witness, a man of grave years, of dignified rank, a man of perfect respectability, who in the very style of these Letters of his has an air of artlessness, of blunt sincerity and veracity, the characteristic of a sailor. There is no motive that could induce him

to deny such a fact; on the contrary, the more heroic one's enemy, the greater one's own heroism. Indeed, I may say generally of England, at this day, that there could not be anywhere a wish to disbelieve such a thing of an enemy recognised as brave among the bravest, but rather a wish, for manhood's sake, to believe it, if possible.

'What I should like therefore is, that these circumstances were, with the widest publicity of Journals or otherwise, to be set openly before the French Nation, and the question thereupon put: have you any counter-evidence? If you have any, produce it; let us weigh it. If you have none, then let us cease to believe this too widely credited narration; let us consider it henceforth as a clever fable got-up for a great occasion; and that the real Vengeur simply fought well, and sank precisely as another ship would have done. The French, I should hope, have accomplished too many true marvels in the way of war to have need of false marvels. At any rate, error, untruth, as to what matter soever, never profited any nation, man, or thing.

'If any of your reputable Journalists, if any honest man, will publish, in your Newspapers or otherwise, an Article on these *data*, and get us either evidence or no evidence, it will throw light on the matter. I have not yet Admiral Griffiths's permission to print this second Letter (though I have little doubt to get it very soon); but the first is already published, and contains all the main facts. My commentary on them, and position towards them, is substantially given above.

'Do what is fit; and let the truth be known.

'Yours always,

'T. Carlyle.'

From Admiral Griffiths I received, without delay, the requisite permission; and this under terms and restrictions, which only did him farther honour, and confirmed, if there had been need of that, one's conviction of his perfect candour as a witness on the matter. His Letter to me is too remarkable not to be inserted here; as illustrative of this controversy; nay, especially if we consider the curious appendix he has added, as conclusive of it. I have not his express permission to print this; but will venture to believe that I have a certain implied discretionary permission, which, without my troubling him with farther applications, may suffice:

5. *Letter of Rear-Admiral Griffiths to T. Carlyle.*

'Sir,—I have received a Letter from —— —— ; of which follows an extract:

* * * * * *

'In reply to the above, I have to say that *you* are at full liberty to use the account I sent you, or that published in the *Sun* Paper, and copied thence into the *Globe, Morning Post, John Bull*, &c. ; and to *quote* me as your authority. But as I have no desire for controversy, or to be made unnecessarily conspicuous, I do not assent to its being published in any other language or Papers, as *so* put forth *by me.*

'I never deemed it worth one thought to awaken the French from their dream of glory in this case ; and should have still preserved silence, had not Mr. Alison and yourself given it the weight of English Authority. What I abstained from doing for forty-four years, I feel no disposition to engage in now. So far as I am an *active* party, I confine my interference to our side of the water ; leaving you to do as you see fit on the other.

'The statement I have already made in the case is abundant. But I will put you in possession of other facts. The action over ; the British fleet brought-to ; the French making all sail, and running before the wind ; their dismasted hulks having also got before the wind, and following them ;—the Vengeur being the sternmost, having a French jack flying on the stump of the foremast, Captain Duckworth of H. M. S. *Orion*, ordered the first lieutenant, Mr. Meares, himself to fire a shot *over her.* This Lieutenant Meares did, and the Vengeur *hauled down the flag!*

'For his gallant conduct in that action, on his return to France, Captain Renaudin, who commanded the Vengeur, was promoted to be Rear-Admiral, and his flag was flying at Toulon on board the *Tonnant*, when I was first-lieutenant of the Culloden blockading that port. I wrote to remind him of the treatment he had met with when prisoner on board the Culloden ; and soliciting his kindness towards Lieutenant Hills, who had been taken in H. M. S. *Berwick*, and being recognised as having, in command of a battery at Toulon, at the period of its evacuation, wounded a Frenchman,—was very ill-used. Renaudin's letter now lies before me ; and does him

much honour, as, during the fervour of that period, it was a dangerous sin to hold intercourse with us. I send you a copy; it is in English.

'I am, Sir, very faithfully yours,
'A. J. Griffiths.'

Here next is the 'curious appendix' we spoke of; which might itself be conclusive of this controversy:

Copy of Rear-Admiral Renaudin's Letter.

'"*On board of the ship Tonnant, Bay of Toulon, the seventeenth Vendémiaire, fourth year of the French Republic.*

'"I have, Sir, received the favour of your letter. I am extremely obliged to you for the interest you have taken to my promotion. I'll never forget the attention you have paid me, as well on board the Culloden as when going to prison. I wish you should be well persuaded that your generosity and sensibility will be forever present to my mind, and that I can't be satisfied before it will be in my power to prove you my gratitude. If your friend, Lieutenant Hills, had not already gone back home, I should have returned to him all the attention you have been so good to paie me. I'll be always sincerely satisfied when it will be in my power to be of some use to any of the officers of the English navy, that the circumstances of war will carry in my country, and particularly to them that you will denote me as your friends.

'"Be so good as take notice of our French officers that you have prisoners, and particularly to Captain Condé that has been taken on the ship *Ca-ira*. Please to remember me to Captain Schomberg, to Mr. Oliver, and to all the rest of the officers that I have known on board of the Culloden. May the peace between our nations give leave to your grateful Renaudin to entertain along with you a longer and easier correspondence."

'Addressed, "To Lieutenant Griffiths, on board of the Culloden, Florenzo Bay, Corse Island."'

My French friend did not find it expedient to publish, in the Journals or elsewhere, any 'article,' or general challenge to his countrymen for counter-evidence, as I had suggested; indeed one easily conceives that no French Journal would

have wished to be the foremost with an article of that kind. However, he did what a man of intelligence, friendliness and love of truth, could do: addressed himself to various official persons connected with the Naval Archives of France; to men of note, who had written French Naval Histories, &c.;—from one of whom came a response in writing, now to be subjoined as my last Document. I ought to say that this latter gentleman had not *seen* Admiral Griffiths's written Letters; and knew them only by description. The others responded verbally; that much was to be said, that they would prepare *Mémoires*, that they would do this and that. I subjoin the response of the one who did respond; it amounts, as will be seen, not to a recantation of an impudent amazing falsehood, but to some vague faint murmur or whimper of admission that it is probably false.

6. *Lettre de Monsieur —— à Monsieur ——* (24 Dec. 1838).

'Mon cher Monsieur,—Je regrette de ne pouvoir vous donner des renseignemens bien prècis sur la glorieuse affaire du *Vengeur*. Mais si l'opinion que je me suis formée sur cet événement peut vous être de quelque utilité, je me féliciterai de vous l'avoir donnée, quelque peu d'influence qu'elle doive avoir sur le jugement que votre ami se propose de porter sur le combat du 13 Prairial.

'Je suis de Brest; et c'est dans cette ville qu'arriva l'escadre de Villaret-Joyeuse, après le combat meurtrier qu'il avait livré à l'Amiral Howe. Plusieurs des marins qui avaient assisté à l'affaire du 13 Prairial m'ont assuré que le Vengeur avait coulé *après* avoir *amené son pavillon*. Quelques hommes de l'équipage de cet héroïque vaisseau furent même, dit-on, recueillis sur des débris par des embarcations anglaises. Mais il n'en est pas moins vrai, que le *Vengeur* ne coula qu'après s'être sacrifié pour empécher l'escadre anglaise de couper la ligne française.

'Les rapports du tems, et les beaux vers de Chênier et de Le Brun sur le naufrage du Vengeur, n'ont pas manqué de poétiser la noble fin de ce vaisseau. C'est aux cris de *Vive la République*, disant-ils, que le vaisseau s'est englouti, avec le pavillon tricolore au plus haut de tous ses mâts. Mais, je le répète, il est très probable que si une partie de l'équipage a disparu dessous les flots aux cris de *Vive la République*, tout

l'équipage n'a pas refusé d'un commun accord le secours que les vaisseaux ennemis pouvaient offrir aux naufragés. Au surplus, quand bien même le Vengeur ait amené son pavillon avant de couler, l'action de ce vaisseau se fesant canonner pendant plusieurs heures pour disputer à toute une escadre le passage le plus faible de la ligne française, n'en était pas moins un des plus beaux faits d'arme de notre histoire navale. Dans les bureaux de la marine, au reste, il n'existe aucun rapport de Villaret-Joyeuse ou de Jean-Bon Saint-André qui puisse faire supposer que le Vengeur ait coulé sans avoir amené son pavillon. On dit seulement dans ces relations du combat du 13, que le Vengeur a disparu après avoir résisté au feu de toute l'escadre anglaise qui voulait rompre la ligne pour tomber sur les derrières de l'armée, et porter le désordre dans tout le reste de notre escadre.

'Voilà, mon cher Monsieur, tout ce que je sais sur l'affaire qui vous occupe. C'est peu de chose comme vous le voyez, car ce n'est presque que mon opinion que je vous exprime sur les petits renseignemens que j'ai pu recueillir de la bouche des marins qui setrouvaient sur le vaisseau la *Montagne* ou d'autres navires de l'escadre Villaret.——Recevez l'assurance,' &c. &c.

The other French gentlemen that 'would prepare *Mémoires*,' have now in the sixth month prepared none; the 'much' that 'was to be said' remains every syllable of it unsaid. My friend urged his official persons; to no purpose. Finally he wrote to Barrère himself, who is still alive and in possession of his faculties. From Barrère no responsite. Indeed, one would have liked to see the ancient adroit countenance of Barrère perusing, through its spectacles, a request to that effect! For verily, as the French say, *tout est dit.* What can be added on such a matter?

I conclude therefore, dear Yorke, with an expression of amazement over this same '*glorieuse affaire du Vengeur;*' in which truly much courage was manifested; but no unparalleled courage except that of Barrère in his Report of the 21st Messidor, Year 2. That a son of Adam should venture on constructing so majestic a piece of *blague*, and hang it out dexterously, like the Earth itself, on *Nothing*, to be believed and venerated by twenty-five million sons of Adam for such a

length of time, the basis of it all the while being simply Zero and Nonentity: there is in this a greatness, nay a kind of sublimity that strikes us silent,—as if 'the Infinite disclosed itself,' and we had a glimpse of the ancient Reign of Chaos and Nox! Miraculous Mahomet, Appollonius with the Golden Thigh, Mendez Pinto, Münchäusen, Cagliostro, Psalmanazar seem but botchers in comparison.

It was a successful lie too? It made the French fight better in that struggle of theirs? Yes, Mr. Yorke;—and yet withal there is no lie, in the long-run, successful. The hour of all windbags does arrive; every windbag is at length ripped, and collapses; likewise the larger and older any ripped windbag is, the more fetid and extensive is the gas emitted therefrom. The French people had better have been content with their real fighting. Next time the French Government publishes miraculous bulletins, the very *badauds* will be slower to believe them; one sees not what sanction, by solemn legislative decree, by songs, ceremonials, wooden emblems, will suffice to produce belief. Of nothing you can, in the long-run, and with much lost labour, make only—Nothing.

But ought not the French Nation to hook-down that wooden '*Modèle du Vengeur*,' now at this late date; and, in a quiet way, split it into brimstone lucifers? The French Nation will take its own method in that.

As for Rear-Admiral Griffiths, we will say that he has, in his veteran years, done one other manful service: extinguished a Falsehood, sent a Falsehood to the Father of it, made the world free of *it* henceforth. For which let him accept our respectful thanks. I, having once been led to assert the fable, hold myself bound, on all fit occasions, to *un*assert it with equal emphasis. Till it please to disappear altogether from the world, as it ought to do, let it lie, as a copper shilling, nailed to the counter, and seen by all customers to be copper. T. Carlyle.

10*th June* 1839.

P. S.—Curiously enough, while this is passing through the press, there appears in some French Newspaper called

Chronique Universelle, and is copied conspicuously into the Paris *National* (du 10 Juin 1839), an article headed '*Six Matelots du Vengeur.*' Six old sailors of the Vengeur, it appears, still survive, seemingly in the Bourdeaux region, in straitened circumstances; whom the editor, with sure hope, here points-out to the notice of the charitable;—on which occasion, as is natural, Barrère's *blague* once more comes into play, not a whit worse for the wear, nay if anything rather fresher than ever. Shall we send these brave old weather-beaten men a trifle of money, and request the Mayor of Mornac to take *their* affidavit?

> 'Nothing in them but doth suffer a sea-change
> Into something new and strange!'

Surely the *blague*, if natural, is not essential in their case. Old men that have fought for France ought to be assisted by France, even though they did not drown themselves after battle. Here is the extract from the *National:*

'*Six Matelots du Vengeur.*

'Tandis que la France faisait triompher son indépendance à toutes ses frontières, le sol, inépuisable en défenseurs, suffisait à peine à la nourrir, et c'était de l'Amérique, à travers less flots de l'Océan, que la France était réduite à recevoir son pain. L'Europe en armes ne pouvait dompter la révolution, l'Angleterre essaya de la prendre par famine. Grâce à la croisière de l'Amiral Howe sur les côtes de Bretagne et de Normandie, elle espérait intercepter un convoi de deux cents voiles, chargé d'une quantité considérable de grains, précieux ravitaillement impatiemment attendu dans nos ports; mais pour sau ver ce convoi une escadre française était déjà sortie de Brest sous le commandement de Villaret-Joyeuse et la direction du représentant du peuple Jean-Bon Saint-André.

'Le 9 Prairial de l'an II (28 Mai 1794), les deux armées navales se sont aperçues, et le cri unanime de nos équipages demande le combat avec un enthousiasme irrésistible. Cependant aux trente-trois vais seaux de ligne et aux douze frégates de l'ennemi, nous n'avions à opposer que trente bâtimens, que des matelots enlevés de la veille à la charrue, que des officiers et un amiral encore novices dans leurs grades, et c'était contre les marins expérimentés de la vieille Angle-

terre qu'il nous fallait soutenir l'honneur du pavillon tricolore, arbore pour la première fois dans un combat sur mer.

'On sait que le combat s'engagea dès le jour même, continua dès le lendemain, fut deux jours interrompu par une brume épaisse, et recommença le 13 (1er Juin) à la lumière d'un soleil éclatant, avec une opiniâtreté inouïe. Notre es cadre racheta l'inhabileté de ses manœuvres par un déploiement extraordinaire de courage, la vivacité terrible de ses feux et l'audace de ses abordages. De quel côté resta la victoire? Les deux flottes, cruellement endommagées, se séparèrent avec une égale lassitude, et désespérèrent d'arracher un succès décisif à la supériorité du nombre ou à l'énergie de la résistance. Mais cette journée fut un baptême de gloire pour notre jeune marine, et la France recueillit le prix du sang versé. Durant cette même journée, notre convoi de deux cents voiles traversait paisiblement le champ de bataille du 10, encore semé de débris, et abordait nos côtes.

'Ce fut au milieu de cette action si mémorable qu'il fut donné à un vaisseau français de se faire une gloire particulière et d'immortaliser son nom. Cerné par les bâtimens ennemis, couvert des lambeaux de ses voiles et de sa mâture, criblé de boulets et déjà faisant eau de toutes parts, le Vengeur refuse d'amener son pavillon. L'équipage ne peut plus combattre, il peut encore mourir. Au tumulte de la résistance, aux clameurs du courage désespéré succède un profond silence; tous montent ou sont portés sur le pont. Ce ne sont plus des combattans, ce sont des martyrs de la religion et de la patrie. Là, tranquillement exposés au feu des Anglais, sentant de moment en moment le vaisseau s'enfoncer dans les flots, l'équipage salue d'un dernier regard les couleurs nationales flottant en pièces au-dessus de sa tête, il pousse un dernier cri de *Vive la République! Vive la Liberté! Vive la France!* et le Vengeur a disparu dans l'abîme. Au récit de ce fait, dont l'Angleterre elle-même rendit témoignage avec admiration, la France entière fut émue et applaudit, dans ce dévouement sublime, son esprit nouveau flottant sur les eaux comme il marchait sur la terre, indomptable et résolu à vaincre ou mourir. D'après un décret de la Convention, le Vengeur légua son nom à un vaisseau en construction dans les bassins de Brest, son image à la voûte du Panthéon, le rôle de l'équipage à la colonne de ce temple, et tous les arts furent appelés à concourir à la célébration de tant d'héroïsme, tandis que la reconnaissance publique s'empressait de secourir les veuves et les orphelins des héros.

'Voilà ce que fit alors la France ; mais ce qu'elle ignore peut-être, c'est que du Vengeur les flots n'ont pas tout englouti, et que six marins, recueillis par l'ennemi et longtemps retenus dans les prisons de l'Angleterre, ont survécu jusqu à cette heure même, réduits à une condition misérable sur le sol de la patrie qui les honora morts et les oublie vivans ! Six, avons-nous dit, et voici leurs noms, leur âge, leur position, leur résidence :

'Prévaudeau (Jacques), âgé de 60 ans, demeurant à Mornac ; vivant, bien que vieux, du peu de travail qu'il peut faire.

'Cerclé (Jean-Pierre), âgé de 69 ans, demeurant à La Tremblade ; vivant médiocrement de son travail.

'David (Jacques), invalide, âgé de 56 ans, demeurant à La Tremblade ; misérable.

'Favier (Jacques), âgé de 64 ans, demeurant à La Tremblade ; n'ayant pour vivre que le travail de ses bras.

'Torchut (André-Pierre), âgé de 70 ans, demeurant à l'Aiguille ; comme ses compagnons, il n'a d'autre ressource que son travail.

'Manequin (François), âgé de 70 ans, demeurant au Gua ; merdiant son pain et presque aveugle.

'Certes, il nous conviendrait peu d'implorer la reconnaissance publique pour ces six marins ; nous croyons suffisant de les nommer. Qu'on nous permette seulement un mot : Sous la restauration, un navire fut expédié jusque dans l'Océan-Pacifique pour découvrir sur les lointains récifs les traces du naufrage de la Peyrouse, et ce fut à grands frais que l'on en réunit quelques débris en bois, en fer, en suivre et en plomb, religieusement conservés dans nos musées. Aujourd'hui, c'est sur notre plage même que gisent, ensevelis dans la misère et dans l'obscurité, des débris vivans du naufrage heroïque du Vengeur ; la France et le gouvernement de Juillet pourraient-ils n'être point jaloux d'acquitter la dette nationale envers ces dernières reliques du patriotisme inspiré par notre grande révolution ?—*Chronique Universelle.*'

*** The publication of this Paper in *Fraser's Magazine* gave rise to a certain effervescence of prose and verse, patriotic-objurgatory, in several of the French Journals, *Revue Britannique, National, Journal du Peuple*, &c. ; the result of which, threatening to prove mere zero otherwise, was that 'M. A. Jal, Historiographer of the French Navy,' did candidly, in the Number of the *Revue Britannique* for October 1839, print

from the Naval Archives of France, the original *Despatch of Captain Renaudin to his own Government;* the full official Narrative of that battle and catastrophe, as drawn up by Renaudin himself, and the surviving officers of the Vengeur; dated Tavistock, 1 Messidor, An II,[1] and bearing his and eight other signatures;—whereby the statement of Admiral Griffiths, if it needed confirmation, is curiously and even minutely confirmed in every essential particular, and the story of the Vengeur is at length put to rest forever.

In that objurgatory effervescence,—which was bound by the nature of it either to cease effervescing and hold its peace, or else to produce some articulate testimony of a living man who saw, or of a dead man who had said he saw, the Vengeur sink otherwise than this living Admiral Griffiths saw it, or than a brave ship usually sinks after brave battle,—the one noticeable vestige of new or old evidence was some dubious traditionary reference to the *Morning Chronicle* of the 16th June; or, as the French traditionary referee turned-out to have named it, '*le Journal* LE MORNING *du* 16 *Juin*.' Following this faint vestige, additional microscopic researches in the *Morning Chronicle* of the 16th June and elsewhere did, at last, disclose to me what seemed the probable genesis and origin of Barrère's Fable; how it first suggested itself to his mind, and gathered shape there, and courage to publish itself: the discovery, unimportant to all other things and men, is not of much importance even to our criticism of Barrère; altering somewhat one's estimate of the *ratio* his poetic faculty may have borne to his mendacity in this business, but leaving the joint *product* of the two very much what it was in spiritual value;—a discovery not worth communicating. The thing a Lie wants, and solicits from all men, is not a correct natural-history of it, but the swiftest possible extinction of it, followed by entire silence concerning it.

[1] Twenty days *before* that final sublime Report of Barrère's.

BAILLIE THE COVENANTER.

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BAILLIE THE COVENANTER.

Mr. Robert Baillie, a solid comfortable Parish Minister of Kilwinning. How he became gradually heated to the welding-pitch, by the troubles of the Seventeenth Century. (p. 159).—Happily his copious loquacity prompted him to use pen as well as tongue without stint. A collection of his Letters printed, and reprinted. Like the hasty, breathless, confused *talk* of a man, looking face to face on that great whirl of things. Strange to consider; *it*, the very phenomenon itself, does stand depictured there, had we intellect *enough* to decipher it: With intellect *enough*, even 'your constant assured friend Charles Rex' were no longer an enigma and chimera. Duty of every reader to read faithfully; and of every writer to write his wisest: Shall stealing the money of a man be a crime; and stealing the time and brains of innumerable men be none; Warm-hearted, canny, blundering, babbling Baillie! The daily tattle of men, as the air carried it two-hundred years ago, becomes audible in these pages: With all its shortcomings, perhaps no book of that period will better reward the trouble of reading. (166).—His account of the Scotch Encampment on the Hill of Dunse; King Charles looking on it with a spy-glass; though without much profit to himself. A far-off look into the domesticities of Baillie: A journey to London: All here weary of bishops: Strafford caged; Canterbury to be pulled down; and everywhere a mighty drama going on. (171).—Impressive passages in the Impeachment and Trial of Strafford. How different from the dreary vacuity of 'Philosophy teaching by experience,' is the living picture of the fact; such as even a Boswell or Baillie can give, if they will honestly look! Our far-off Fathers, face to face; alive,—and yet not alive. On our horizon, too, loom now inevitabilities no less stern: one knows not sometimes, whether not very near at hand. (180).

BAILLIE THE COVENANTER.[1]

[1841.]

Early in the seventeenth century of our era, a certain Mr. Robert Baillie, a man of solid wholesome character, lived in moderate comfort as Parish Minister of Kilwinning, in the west of Scotland. He had comfortably wedded, produced children, gathered Dutch and other fit divinity-books; saw his duties lying tolerably manageable, his possessions, prospects not to be despised; in short, seemed planted as for life, with fair hopes of a prosperous composed existence, in that remote corner of the British dominions. A peaceable, 'solid-thinking, solid-feeding,' yet withal clear-sighted, diligent and conscientious man, —alas, his lot turned-out to have fallen in times such as he himself, had he been consulted on it, would by no means have selected. Times of controversy; of oppression, which became explosion and distraction: instead of peaceable preaching, mere raging, battling, soldiering; universal shedding of gall, of ink and blood: very troublous times! Composed existence at Kilwinning, with rural duties, domestic pledges, Dutch bodies of divinity, was no longer possible for a man.

Till the advent of Laud's Service-book into the High Church of Edinburgh (Sunday the 23d of July 1637), and that ever-memorable flight of Jenny Geddes's stool at the head of the Dean officiating there, with "Out, thou foul thief! wilt thou say mass at my lug?"—till that unexpected cardinal-move-

[1] London and Westminster Review, No. 72.—*The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, A.M., Principal of the University of Glasgow, 1637-1662.* Edited from the Author's Manuscripts, by David Laing, Esq. 3 vols. (Vols. i. and ii.) Robert Ogle, Edinburgh, 1841.

ment, we say, and the universal, unappeasable riot, which ensued thereupon over all these Kingdoms,—Baillie, intent on a quiet life at Kilwinning, was always clear for some mild middle course, which might lead to this and other blessings. He even looked with suspicion on the Covenant when it was started; and was not at all one of the first to sign it. Sign it, however, he did by and by, the heat of others heating him ever higher to the due welding pitch; he signed it, and became a vehement, noteworthy champion of it, in such fashion as he could. Baillie, especially if heated to the welding pitch, was by no means without faculty. There lay motion in him; nay, curiously, with all his broad-based heaviness, a kind of alacrity, of internal swiftness and flustering impetuosity,—a natural vehemence, assiduous swift eagerness, both of heart and intellect: very considerable motion; all embedded, too, in that most wholesome, broad-based love of rest! The eupeptic, right-thinking nature of the man; his sanguineous temper, with its vivacity and sociality; an ever-busy ingenuity, rather small perhaps, but prompt, hopeful, useful; always with a good dash, too, of Scotch shrewdness, Scotch *canniness;* and then a loquacity, free, fervid, yet judicious, *canny*,—in a word, natural vehemence, wholesomely covered over and tempered (as Sancho has it) in 'three inches of old Christian *fat*,'—all these fitted Baillie to be a leader in General Assemblies and conclaves, a man deputable to the London Parliament and elsewhither. He became a prominent, and so far as the Scotch Kirk went, preëminent man; present in the thick of all negotiations, Westminster Assemblies, Scotch Commissions, during the whole Civil War. It can be said too, that his natural faculty never, in any pitch of heat or confusion, proved false to him; that here, amid revolt and its dismal fluctuations, the worthy man lived agitated indeed, but not unprosperous. Clearly enough, in that terrible jostle, where so many stumbling fell, and straightway had their lives and fortunes trodden out, Baillie did, according to the Scotch proverb, contrive to 'carry his dish level' in a wonderful manner, spilling no drop; and indeed was found at last, even after Cromwell and all Sectaries had been there, seated with prosperous composure, not

in the Kirk of Kilwinning, but in the Principalship of Glasgow University; which latter he had maintained successfully through all changes of weather, and only needed to renounce at the coming-in of Charles II., when, at any rate, he was too old for holding it much longer. So invincible, in all elements of fortune, is a good natural endowment; so serviceable to a man is that same quality of motion, if embedded in wholesome love of rest,—hasty vehemence dissolved in a bland menstruum of oil!

Baillie, however we may smile at him from this distance, was not entirely a common character: yet it must be owned that, for anything he of himself did or spoke or suffered, the worthy man must have been forgotten many a year ago; the name of him dead, non-extant; or turning-up (as the doom of such) is like the melancholy mummy of a name, under the eye of here and there an excavator in those dreary mines,—bewildered, interminable rubbish-heaps of the Cromwellian Histories; the dreariest perhaps that anywhere exist, still visited by human curiosity, in this world. But his copious loquacity, by good luck for him and for us, prompted Baillie to use the pen as well as tongue. A certain invaluable 'Reverend Mr. Spang,' a cousin of his, was Scotch minister at Campvere, in Holland, with a boundless appetite to hear what was stirring in those days; to whom Baillie, with boundless liberality, gives satisfaction. He writes to Spang, on all great occasions, sheet upon sheet; he writes to his Wife, to the Moderator of his Presbytery, to earls and commoners, to this man and to that; nothing loth to write when there is matter. Many public Papers (since printed in Rushworth's and other Collections) he has been at the pains to transcribe for his esteemed correspondents; but what to us is infinitely more interesting, he had taken the further trouble to make copies of his own Letters. By some lucky impulse, one hardly guesses how—for as to composition, nothing can be worse written than these Letters are, mere hasty babblements, like what the extempore speech of the man would be,—he took this trouble; and ungrateful posterity reaps the fruit. These Letters, bound together as a manuscript book, in the hands of Baillie's heirs,

grew ever more notable as they grew older ; copies, at various times, were made of parts of them ; some three copies of the whole, or almost the whole, whereof one, tolerably complete, now lies in the British Museum.[1] Another usefuller copy came into the hands of Woodrow, the zealous, diligent Historian of the Scotch Church, whose numerous Manuscripts, purchased partly by the General Assembly, partly by the Advocates' Library, have now been accessible to all inquirers, for a century or more. Baillie, in this new position, grew ever notabler ; was to be seen quoted in all books on the history of that period ; had to be read and searched through, as a chief authority, by all original students of the same. Half a century of this growing notability issued at last in a printed edition of Baillie ; two moderate octavo volumes, published, apparently by subscription, at Edinburgh, in 1775. Thus, at length, had the copious outpourings, first emitted into the ear of Spang and others, become free to the curiosity of all ; purchasable by every one that had a few shillings, legible by every one that had a little patience. As the interest in those great transactions never died-out in Scotland, Baillie's *Letters and Journals*, one of the best remaining illustrations of them, became common in Scottish libraries.

Unfortunately, this same printed edition was one of the worst. A tradition, we are told, was once current among Edinburgh booksellers that it had been undertaken on the counsel of Robertson and Hume ; but, as Mr. Laing now

[1] As in this Museum transcript, otherwise of good authority, the name of the principal correspondent is not 'Spang' but 'Strang,' and we learn elsewhere that Baillie wrote the miserablest hand, a question arises, Whether *Strang* be not, once for all, the real name, and *Spang*, from the first, a mere false reading, which has now become inveterate ? *Strang* equivalent to *Strong*, is still a common name in those parts of Scotland. *Spang* (which is a Scottish verb, signifying *leap violently*, *leap distractedly*,—as an imprisoned, terrified kangaroo might leap) we never heard of as a Christian person's surname before ! 'The Reverend Mr. *Leap-distractedly*' labouring in that dense element of Campvere, in Holland ? We will hope not, if there be a ray of hope ! The Bannatyne Club, now in a manner responsible, is adequate to decide.— — *Spang* is the name, persist they (A. D. 1846).

remarks, it is not a creditable tradition. Robertson and Hume would, there is little doubt, feel the desirableness of having Baillie edited, and may, on occasion, have been heard saying so ; but such an edition as this of 1775 is not one they could have had any hand in. In fact, Baillie may be said to have been printed on that occasion, but not in any true sense edited at all. The quasi-editor, who keeps himself entirely hidden in the background, is guessed to have been one 'Mr. Robert Aiken, Schoolmaster of Anderton,'—honour to his poor shadow of a name ! He went over Baillie's manuscripts in such fashion as he could ; 'omitted many Letters on private affairs ;' copied those on public matters, better or worse ; and prefixing some brief, vague *Memoir of Baillie*, gathered out of the general wind, sent his work through the press, very much as it liked to go. Thanks to him, poor man, for doing so much ; not blame that, in his meagre garret, he did not do more ! But it is to be admitted, few books were ever sent forth in a more helpless condition. The very printer's errors are numerous. Note or comment there is none whatever, and here and there some such was palpably indispensable ; for Baillie, in the hurry of his written babblement, is wont to designate persons and things, often enough, in ways which Spang and the world would indeed understand at the time, but which now only critics and close investigators can make out. The narrative, watery, indistinct, flowing out in vague diffusion, at the first and best, fades now too frequently into the enigmatic, and stagnates in total obscuration, if some little note be not added. Whom does the Letter-writer, in his free and easy speed, intend to designate by such phrases as 'his Lordship,' 'the Lord Marquis,' his Grace, precious Mr. David, the Reverend Mr. H. of N. ? An editor ought to tell ; and has not tried there to do it. Far from doing it, he has even mistaken some of the initials themselves, and so left the natural dimness changed into Egyptian dark. Read in this poor Anderton edition, Baillie, in many passages, produces the effect, not of a painting, even of the hugest sign-post painting, but of a monstrous, foamy smear, resemblance of no created thing whatever. Additional outlays of patience become requisite,

and will not always suffice. It is an enigma you might long guess over, did not perhaps indolence and healthy instincts premonish you that, when you had it, the secret would be worth little.

To all which unhappy qualities we are to add, that this same edition of 1775 had, in late times, become in the highest degree difficult to get hold of! In English libraries it never much abounded, nor in the English book-markets; its chief seat was always its native one. But of late, as would seem, what copies there were, the growing interest of whatsoever related to the heroes of the Civil War had altogether absorbed. Most interesting to hear what an eye-witness, even a stupid eye-witness, if honest, will say of such matters! The reader that could procure himself a *Baillie* to pore over, was lucky. The price in old book-shops here in London had risen, if by rare chance any copy turned up, to the exorbitancy of two guineas!

And now, under these circumstances, the Bannatyne Club, a private reunion of men who devote themselves expressly to the rescue and reprinting of scarce books and manuscripts, with or without much value, very wisely determined to reëdit *Baillie;* first, for their own private behoof; and secondly, as is their wise wont in some cases, and as in every case is easy for them (the types being already all set, and the printer's 'composition' accomplished, as it were, gratis), for the behoof of the public that will buy. Very wisely too, they appointed for this task their Honorary Secretary, the Keeper of the Edinburgh Signet Library, Mr. David Laing, a gentleman well known for his skill in that province of things. Two massive Octavos, in round legible type, are accordingly here; a Third and last is to follow in a few months; and so Baillie's *Letters and Journals*, finally in right reading condition, becomes open, on easy terms, to whoever has concern in it. In right reading condition; for notes and all due marginal guidances, such as we desiderated above, are furnished; the text is rectified by collation of three several Manuscripts, among others, Baillie's own, of the 'evil handwriting' of which an appalling facsimile gives evidence; the various Letters relating to private affairs

are not excluded in this edition, but wisely introduced and given in full, as deserving their paper and ink perhaps better than the average. On the other hand, public Papers, if easily accessible elsewhere, are withheld, and a reference given to the *Rushworth*, *Hardwicke*, *Thurloe*, or other such *Collection*, where they already stand; if not easily accessible, they are printed here in appendixes; and indeed not they only, but many more not copied by Baillie, some of them curious enough, which the editor's resources and long acquaintance with the literature of Scotch History have enabled him to offer. This is the historical description, origin and genesis of these two massive Octavos named *Baillie's Letters and Journals*, published by the Bannatyne Club, which now lie before us; thus are they, and thence did they come into the world.

It remains now only to be added, critically as well as historically, that Mr. Laing, according to all appearance, has exhibited his usual industry, sagacity, correctness, in this case; and done his work well. The notes are brief, illuminative, ever in the right place; and, what we will praise withal, not over plenteous, not more of them than needed. Nothing is easier than for an antiquarian editor to seize too eagerly any chance or pretext for pouring-out his long-bottled antiquarian lore, and drowning his text, instead of refreshing and illustrating it; a really criminal proceeding! This, we say, the present editor has virtuously forborne. A good index, a tolerable biography, are to be looked for, according to promise, in the Third Volume. Baillie will then stand on his shelves, accessible, in good reading condition: a fact which, since it is actually a fact, may with propriety enough be published in this journal, and in any and all other journals or methods, as widely as the world and its wants and ways will allow.

We have no thought here of going much into criticism of Baillie or his Book; still less of entering at all on that enormous Business he and it derive their interest from,—that enormous whirlpool on which, the fountains of the great deep suddenly breaking up, the pacific, broad-based Minister sees himself launched forth from Kilwinning Kirk, and set sailing, and epistolising! The Book has become curious to us, and

the Man curious; much more so on a riper acquaintance than they were at first. Nevertheless, our praise of him, hearty enough in its kind, must on all sides be limited. To the general, especially to the uninformed or careless reader, it will not be safe to promise much ready entertainment from this Book. Entertainment does lie in it, both amusement and instruction do; but rather for the student than the careless reader. Poor Baillie is no epic singer or speaker,—the more is the pity! His Book is like the hasty, breathless, confused *talk* of a man, looking face to face on that great whirl of things. A wiser man—would have talked *more* wisely! But, on the whole, this man too has a living heart, a seeing pair of eyes; above all, he is clearly a veracious man; tells Spang and you the truest he has got to tell, in such a bustling hurry as his. Veracious in word; and we might say, what is a much rarer case, veracious in thought too; for he harbours no malignity, perverse hatred, purposes no wrong against any man or thing; and indeed, at worst, is of so transparent a nature, all readers can discern at all times where his bias lies, and make due allowance for that.

Truly, it is pity the good man had not been a little wiser; had not shown a little more of the epic gift in writing: we might then have had, as in some clear mirror, or swift contemporaneous *Daguerreotype* delineator, a legible living picture of that great Time, as it looked and was! But, alas, no soul of a man is altogether such a 'mirror;' the highest soul is only approximately, and still at a great distance, such. Besides, we are always to remember, poor Baillie wrote not for us at all; but for Spang and the Presbytery of Irvine, with no eye to us! What of picture there is, amid such vaporous mazy indistinctness, or indeed quite turbulent weltering dislocation and confusion, must be taken as a Godsend. The man gazes as he can, reports as he can. His words flowing-out bubble-bubble, full of zealous broad-based vehemence, can rarely be said to make a picture; though on rare occasions he does pause, and with distinctness, nay with a singular felicity, give some stroke of one. But rarely, in his loquacious haste, has he taken time to detect the real articulation and structure of

the matter he is talking of,—where it begins, ends, what the real character and purport, the real aspect of it is: how shall he in that case, by any possibility, make a portrait of it? He talks with breathless loquacity, with adipose vehemence, about it and about it. Nay, such lineaments of it as he has discovered and mastered, or begun to discover (for the man is by no means without an eye, could he have taken time to look), he, scrawling without limit to Spang, uses not the smallest diligence to bring-out on the surface, or to separate from the as yet chaotic, undiscovered; he leaves them weltering at such depth as they happen to lie at. A picture does struggle in him; but in what state of development the reader can guess. As the image of a real object may do, shadowed in some huge frothy ever-agitated vortex or deluge, —ever-agitated cauldron, boiling, bubbling, with fat vehemence!

Yet this too was a thing worth having: what talk, what babblement, the Minister of rural Kilwinning, brought suddenly in sight of that great World-transaction, will audibly emit from him. Here it is, fresh and fresh,—after two centuries of preservation: how that same enormous whirlpool, of a British Nation all torn from its moorings, and set in conflict and self-conflict, represents itself, from moment to moment, in the eyes of this shrewdsimple, zealous, yet broad-bottomed, rest-loving man. On the whole, is there not, to the eager student of History, something at once most attractive and yet most provoking in all Memoirs by a Contemporary? Contemporaneous words by an eye-witness are like no other. For every man who sees with eyes *is*, approximately or else far off,—either approximately and in some faint degree decipherable, or too far off, altogether *un*decipherable, and as if vacant and blank,—the miraculous 'Daguerreotype-mirror,' above-mentioned, of whatever thing transacts itself before him. No shadow of it but left some trace in him, decipherable or undecipherable. The poor *soul* had, lying in it, a far stranger alchemy than that of the electric-plates: a living Memory, namely, an Intelligence, better or worse. Words by an eye-witness! You have there the words which a son of Adam,

looking on the phenomenon itself, saw fittest for depicturing it. Strange to consider: *it*, the very phenomenon itself, does stand depictured there, though under such inextricable obscurations, shortcomings, perversions,—fatally eclipsed from us forever. For we cannot read it; the traces are so faint, confused, as good as non-extant to our organs: the light was so unfavourable,—the 'electric-plate' was so extremely *bad*. Alas, you read a hundred autograph holograph letters, signed 'Charles Rex,' with the intensest desire to understand Charles Rex, to know what Charles Rex was, what he had in his eye at that moment: and to no purpose. The summary of the whole hundred autographs is vacuity, inanity; like the moaning of winds through desert places, through damp empty churches: what the writer did actually mean, the thing he then thought of, the thing he then was, remain forever hid from you. No answer; only the ever-moaning, gaunt, unsyllabled *woo-woo* of wind in empty churches! Most provoking; a provocation as of Tantalus;—for there is not a word written there but stands like a kind of window through which a man *might* see, or feels as if he might see, a glimpse of the whole matter. Not a jolt in those crabbed angular sentences, nay not a twirl in that cramp penmanship, but is significant of all you seek. Had a man but intellect *enough*,—which, alas, no man ever had, and no angel ever had,—how would the blank become a picture all legible! The doleful, unsyllabled *woo-woo* of church-winds had become intelligible, cheering articulation; that tragic, fatal-looking, peak-bearded individual, 'your constant assured friend, Charles Rex,' were no longer an enigma and chimera to you! With intellect *enough*,—alas, yes it were all easy then; the very signing of his name were then physiognomical *enough* of him!

Or, descending from such extreme heights and rarefactions, where, in truth, human nature cannot long breathe with satisfaction,—may we not here deduce once more the humble practical inference, How extremely incumbent it is on every reader to read faithfully with whatever of intellect he has; on every writer, in like manner, to exert himself, and write his wisest? Truly the man who says, still more who writes, a

wise word on any object he has seen with his eyes, or otherwise come to know and be master of, the same is a benefactor to all men. He that writes unwise words, again,—especially if on any great, ever-memorable object, which in this manner catches him up, so to speak, and keeps him memorable along with it,—is he not the indisputablest *male*factor? Yes; though unfortunately there is no bailiff to collar him for it, and give him forty stripes save one; yet, if he could do better, and has not done it,—yes! Shall stealing the money of a man be a crime; and stealing the time and brains of innumerable men, generation after generation of men, be none? For your tenebrific criminal has fixed himself on some great object, and cannot perhaps be forgotten for centuries; one knows not when he will be entirely forgotten! He, for his share, has not brought light into the world according to his opportunity, but darkness; he is a son of Nox, has treacherously deserted to the side of Chaos, Nox and Erebus; strengthening, perpetuating, so far as lay in him, the reign of prolixity, vacuity, vague confusion, or in one word, of stupidity and *mis*knowledge on this earth! A judicious Reviewer,—in a time when the 'abolition of capital punishments' makes such progress in both Hemispheres,—would not willingly propose a new penalty of *death;* but in any reasonable practical suggestion, as of a bailiff and forty stripes save one, to be doubled in case of relapse, and to go on doubling in rigid geometric progression till amendment ensued, he will cheerfully concur.

But to return. The above considerations do not, it is clear, apply with any stringency to poor Baillie; whose intellect, at best, was never an epic one; whose opportunities, good as they look, were much marred by circumstances; above all, whose epistolary performance was moderately satisfactory to Spang! We are to repeat that he has an intellect, and a most lively, busy one of its kind; that he is veracious, what so few are. If the cursory reader do not completely profit by him, the student of History will prosper better. But in this, as in all cases, the student of History must have patience. Everywhere the student of History has to pass his probation, his

apprenticeship; must first, with painful perseverance, *read* himself *into* the century he studies,—which naturally differs much from our century; wherein, at first entrance, he will find all manner of things, the ideas, the personages, and their interests and aims, foreign and unintelligible to him. He as yet knows nobody, can yet care for nobody, completely understand nobody. He must read himself into it, we say; make himself at home, and acquainted, in that repulsive foreign century. Acquaintance once made, all goes smoother and smoother; even the hollow-sounding 'constant assured friend Charles Rex' improves somewhat; how much more this headlong, warm-hearted, blundering, babbling, 'sagacious jolterhead' of a Baillie! For there is a real worth in him, spite of its strange guise;—something of the Boswell; rays of clear genial insight, sunny illumination, which alternate curiously with such babblement, oily vehemence, confused hallucination and sheer floundering platitude! An incongruous, heterogeneous man; so many inconsistencies, all united in a certain prime-element of most turbid, but genuine and fertile *radical warmth.*

Poor Baillie! The daily tattle of men, as the air carried it two hundred years ago, becomes audible again in those pages: an old dead Time, seen alive again, as through a glass darkly. Those hasty chaotic records of his, written down offhand from day to day, are worth reading. They produce on us something like the effect of a contemporaneous daily newspaper; more so than any other record of that time; much more than any of the *Mercuries*, 'Britannic,' 'Aulic,' 'Rustic,' which then passed as newspapers, but which were in fact little other than dull-hot objurgatory pamphlets,—grown cold enough now. Baillie is the true newspaper; he is to be used and studied like one. Taken up in this way, his steamy indistinctness abates, as our eye gets used to the steamy scene he lives in; many a little trait discloses itself, where at first mere vacant confusion was discernible. Once familiar to the time, we find the old contemporaneous newspaper, which seemed mere waste paper, a rather interesting document. Nay, as we said, the Kilwinning Minister himself by degrees gets interesting;

for there is a strange homely worth in him, lovable and ludicrous; a strange mass of shrewd simplicities, naiveties, blundering ingenuities, and of right wholesome vitalities withal. Many-tinted traceries of Scotch humours, such as a Galt, a Scott, or a Smollett might have rejoiced over, lie in this man, unobliterated by the Covenant and all distance of time. How interesting to descry, faintly developed, yet there and recognisable through the depths of two dead centuries, and such dense garnitures and dialects all grown obsolete, the indubitablest traits of Scotch human-nature, redolent of the 'West-country,' of the kindly 'Salt-market,' even as this Day still sees it and lovingly laughs over it! Rubicund broad lineaments of a Nicol Jarvie, sly touches too of an Andrew Fairservice; nay sputterings, on occasion, of the tindery tragic fire of an adust Lieutenant Leshmahago,—fat as this man is, and of a pacific profession! We could laugh much over him, and love him much, this good Baillie; but have not time at present. We will point out his existence; advise all persons who have a call that way to read that same 'contemporaneous newspaper' of his with attention and thanks. We give it small praise when we say, there is perhaps no book of that period which will, in the end, better reward the trouble of reading. Alas, to those unfortunate persons who have sat, for long months and years, obstinately incurring the danger of locked-jaw, or suspension at least of all the thinking faculties, in stubborn perusal of Whitlocke, Heylin, Prynne, Burton, Lilburn, Laud and Company,—all flat, boundless, dead and dismal as an Irish bog,—such praise will not seem too promissory!

But it is time to let Baillie speak a little for himself; readers, both cursory and studious, will then judge a little for themselves. We have fished-up, from much circumambient indistinctness and embroiled babblement, a lucid passage or two. Take first that clear vision, made clear to our eyes also, of the Scotch encamped in warlike array under Field-Marshal Alexander Lesley, that 'old little crooked soldier,' on the slopes of Dunse Law, in the sunny days of 1639. Readers

are to fancy that the flight of Jenny Geddes's stool, which we named a cardinal movement (as wrongs long compressed do but require some slight fugling-signal), has set all Scotland into uproar and violent gesticulation: the *first* slight stroke of a universal battle and wrestle, with all weapons, on the part of all persons, for the space of twenty years or so,—one of the *later* strokes of which severed a king's head off! That there were flockings of men to Edinburgh, and four 'Tables' (not for dining at) set up. That there have been National Covenants, General Assemblies, royal commissioners; royal proclamations not a few, with protests of equal number; much ineffectual proclaiming, and protesting, and vociferating; then, gradually, private 'drillings in Fife' and other shires; then public calling-forth of the 'twelfth penny,' of the 'fourth fencible men;' Dutch arms from Holland, Scotch officers from Germany,—not to speak of commissariat-stores, thrifty 'webs of harding' (*canvas*) drawn 'from the good wives of Edinburgh' by eloquent pulpit-appeals 'of Mr. Harry Rollock:'—and so, finally, this is what we discern on the pleasant conical Hill of Dunse, in the summer weather of 1639. For, as Baillie says, 'They might see now that before we would be roasted with a slow fire, by the hands of Churchmen who keeped themselves far aback from the same, we were resolved to make a bolt through the reek, and try to get a grip of some of those who had first kindled the fire, and still laid fuel to it, —and try if we could cast *them* in the midst of it, to taste if that heat was pleasant when it came near their own skins!' Proper enough; and lo, accordingly:

'This our march did much affray the English camp: Dunse Law was in sight, within six or seven miles; for they lay in pavilions some two miles above Berwick, on the other side of Tweed, in a fair plain along the river. The king himself, beholding us through a prospect (*spy-glass*), did conjecture us to be sixteen or eighteen thousand men; but at one time we were above twenty thousand.'

'It would have done you good to have casten your eyes athort our brave and rich Hill, as oft I did, with great contentment and joy. For I (quoth the wren) was there among

the rest; being chosen preacher by the Gentlemen of our Shire, who came late with my Lord of Eglinton. I furnished to half a dozen of good fellows muskets and pikes, and to my boy a broadsword. I carried, myself, as the fashion was, a sword and a couple of Dutch pistols at my saddle; but, I promise, for the offence of no man except a robber in the way; for it was our part to pray and preach for the encouragement of our countrymen, which I did, to my power, most cheerfully. Our Hill was garnished on the top, towards the south and east, with our mounted cannon; well near to the number of forty, great and small. Our regiments lay on the sides of the Hill, almost round about; the place was not a mile in circle; a pretty round, rising in a declivity, without steepness, to the height of a bow-shot; on the top, somewhat plain; about a quarter of a mile in length, and as much in breadth; as I remember, capable of tents for forty thousand men. The crowners[1] lay in kennous (*canvas*) lodges, high and wide; their captains about them in lesser ones; the sojours about all in huts of timber covered with divot (*turf*) or straw. Our crowners, for the most part, were noblemen: Rothes, Lindsay, Sinclair had among them two full regiments at least, from Fife; Balcarras a horse-troop; Loudon,' &c. &c. 'Our captains were mostly barons, or gentlemen of good note; our lieutenants, almost all, sojours who had served over sea in good charges. Every company had flying, at the captain's tent-door, a brave new Colour, with the Scottish Arms, and this ditton, *For Christ's Crown and Covenant*, in golden letters,'—a notable emblazonment indeed!

'The councils of war were keeped daily in the Castle of Dunse; the ecclesiastic meetings in Rothes's large tent. Lesley the General, and Baillie his Lieutenant, came nightly on their horses for the setting of the watch. Our sojours were all lusty and full of courage; the most of them stout young ploughmen; great cheerfulness in the face of all. The only difficulty was to get them dollars or two the man, for their voyage from home and the time they entered on pay: for among our yeomen money at any time, not to say then, used to be very scarce.' 'We were much obliged to the town of Edinburgh for moneys: Harry Rollock, by his sermons, moved them to shake out their purses; the garners of Non-covenant-

[1] *Crowner*, *coroner*, and (to distinguish this officer from him who holds the inquests), *coronel*, which last is still intrinsically our pronunciation of the word now spelt *colonel*.

ers, especially of James Maxwell and my Lord Winton, gave us plenty of wheat. One of our Ordinances was To seize on the rents of Non-covenanters,'—ane helpful Ordinance, so far as it went.

'Our sojours grew in experience of arms, in courage, in favour, daily: every one encouraged the other; the sight of the nobles and their beloved pastors daily raised their hearts. The good sermons and prayers, morning and even, under the roof of Heaven, to which their drums did call them for bells; the remonstrances, very frequent, of the goodness of their Cause, of their conduct (*guidance*) hitherto by a Hand clearly Divine; also Lesley his skill and fortune,—made them all so resolute for battle as could be wished. We were feared (*afraid*) that emulation among our nobles might have done harm when they should be met in the fields; but such was the wisdom and authority of that old little crooked souldier, that all, with ane incredible submission, from the beginning to the end, gave over themselves to be guided by him, as if he had been Great Solyman. He keeped daily, in the Castle of Dunse, ane honourable table: for the nobles and strangers, with himself: for the gentlemen waiters, thereafter at a long side-table. I had the honour, by accident, one day to be his chaplain at table, on his left hand. The fare was as became a general in time of war: not so curious by far as Arundel's, in the English Camp, to our nobles; but ye know that the English sumptuosity, both in war and peace, is despised by all their neighbours,'—*bursten poke-puddings* of Englishers, whose daily care is to dine, not wisely but too well!

'But had ye lent your ear in the morning, or especially at even, and heard in the tents the sound of some singing psalms, some praying, and some reading Scripture, ye would have been refreshed. True, there was swearing, and cursing, and brawling, in some quarters: but we hoped, if our camp had been a little settled, to have gotten some way for these misorders; for all, of any fashion, did regret, and all did promise to contribute their best endeavours for helping all abuses. For myself, I never found my mind in better temper than it was all the time frae I came from home, till my head was again homeward; for I was as a man who had taken my leave from the world, and was resolved to die in that service without return. I found the favour of God shining upon me; and a sweet, meek, yet strong and vehement spirit leading me, all along. But, alas, I was no sooner on my way west-

ward, after the conclusion of peace, than my old security returned.'[1]

This is the Scotch Encampment on the Hill of Dunse; King Charles looking at it through a spy-glass, not without interest, from the plain above Berwick on the other side of the river. Could he have discovered the Reverend Robert Baillie riding thither from Kilwinning, girt with sword and Dutch pistols, followed by the five or six rough characters whom he had laid out hard cash to furnish with muskets and pikes, and to what a dreadful pitch the mind of the pacific broad-based man had now got itself screwed, resolute 'to die on that service without return,'—truly, this also might have been illuminative for his Majesty! Heavy Baillie was an emblem of heavy Scotland, in the rear of which lay heavy England. But 'our sweet Prince' discerned only the surfaces of things. The mean peddling details hid from him, as they still do from so many, the essential great meaning of the matter; and he thought, and still again thought, that the rising-up of a million men, to assert that they were verily men with souls, and not automatons with wires, was some loud-sounding pettiness, some intrigue,—to be dealt with by intriguing. Herein he fundamentally mistook; mis-saw;—and so mis-*went*, poor Prince, in all manner of ways: to the front of Whitehall ultimately!

But let us now, also through a kind of dim spy-glass, cast a far-off look into the domesticities of Baillie; let us glance, namely, through certain of these paper-missives, into that ancient Manse of Kilwinning; all vanished now, to the last stone of it, long since; swallowed in the depths of edacious Time. The reader shall also see a journey to Town done on ponies, along the coast of what is now the Great Northeastern Railway, working with so much more velocity by steam!

[1] We have used the freedom to modernise Baillie's spelling a little; about which, 'as he could never fix,' says Mr. Laing, 'on any constant way of spelling his own name,' there need not be much delicacy: we also endeavour to improve his punctuation, &c., here and there; but will nowhere in the least alter his sense.

The 'Treaty of Berwick,' fruit of that Dunse-Law expedition of the Scotch People, has soon issued again in proclamations, in 'papers burnt by the hangman;' and then in a new Scotch Armament, lodged, this time, not on Dunse Hill, with uncertain moneys from Mr. Harry Rollock, but, by a bold movement through the Tyne at Newburn, safely in the town of Newcastle, with eight hundred pounds a-day from the northern counties: whereupon follows a new 'Treaty of Rippon,'—fit also to be burnt by the hangman by and by. Baillie rejoices somewhat in the milk and honey of these northern counties, comparatively a fat, productive land. The heroic man, girt again with Dutch pistols, innocuous except to thieves, had made his Will before departing on these formidable expeditions: 'It will be my earnest desire,' thus wills he, 'that my wife be content with the annual-rent of seven thousand merk (*Scots*) from what is first and readiest, and that she quit judicially what further she could crave by her very subdolous contract'—subdolous contract, I say, though not of her making; which she should *quit*. 'What then remains, let it be employed for her children's education and profit. I would give to Robert five thousand merk, if he quit his heirship; the rest to be equally divided betwixt Harrie and Lillie. Three hundred merk to be distributed presently among the Poor of the Parish of Kilwinning, at sight of the Session.' All this we omit, and leave behind us in a state of comfortable fixity;—being bound now on a new mission: to the new Parliament (which will one day become a Long Parliament) just sitting down at present. Read these select fractions of Letters 'to Mrs. Baillie at Kilwinning,' dated November 1640, on the road to London:

'My Heart,—I wrote to thee from Edinburgh; also, from Kelso, to Mr. Claud, suspecting thy absence from home. I wrote to thee likewise here, in Newcastle, on Saturday last. Since, I thank God, I have been very weel, as thy heart could wish, and all my company.

'Yesternight the Committee sent for me, and told me of their desire I should go to London with the Commissioners. I made sundry difficulties; which partly they answered, and

partly took to their consideration till this day. But now, at our presbytery after sermon, both our noblemen and ministers in one voice thought meet that not only Mr. Alexander Henderson, but also Mr. Robert Blair, Mr. George Gillespie, and I, should all three, for divers ends, go to London; Mr. Robert Blair to satisfy the minds of many in England who love the way of New England (*Independency*) better than that of Presbyteries in our Church; I for the convincing of that prevalent faction (*Arminian Episcopals*) against which I have written; Mr. Gillespie for the crying-down of the English ceremonies, on which he has written; and all four of us to preach, by turns, to our Commissioners in their house; which is the custom of divers noblemen at court, and was our practice all the time of the Conference at Rippon. We mind to Durham, God willing, to-morrow; and other twelve miles on Saturday, to Darntoun (*Darlington*), there to stay all Sunday, where we hope to hear, before we cross the Tees on Monday, how things are like to frame in the English Parliament. London is fashed with a defluxion; he will stay here till Monday, and come on as health serves, journey or post.

'They speak here of the prentices pulling down the High-Commission house at London; of General King's landing, with six or seven thousand Danes, in the mouth of the Thames, near London. We wish it were so; but we take it, and many things more you will hear, for clatters.

'My Heart, draw near to God; neglect not thy prayers morning and evening with thy servants, as God will help thee; read and pray, beside that, in private. Put Rob to the school; teach him and Harrie both some little beginnings of God's fear; have a care of my little Lillie. I pray thee write to me how thou and they are.

'Thy awne,

'R. Baillie.

'Newcastle, 5 November 1640.'

'My Heart,—Thou sees I slip no occasion. I wrote to thee yesternight from Newcastle; this night I am in Durham, very weel, rejoicing in God's good providence.

'After I closed my letters, my boy Jamie was earnest to go with me; so, notwithstanding of my former resolution to send him home, I was content to take him. I spake to the General, and put-in his name, as my man, in the safe-conduct. But, when I was to loup on (*to mount horse*), he failed me, and would go no farther! I could not strive then; I gave him

his leave, and a dollar to carry him home. His folly did me great wrong; for if I should have gone back to bespeak ane other, I would have lossed my company: so without troubling myself, I went forward with my company, manless. But, behold the gracious providence of my God: as I enter in Durham, one of my old scholars, a preacher in Colonel Ramsay's regiment of horse, meets with me before I light; will have me to his chamber; gives me his chamber, stable, servant, a cup of sack, and all courtesy; gets me a religious youth, a trooper, ready with a good horse, to go with me to London. Major-General Baillie makes me, and all the Commissioners that were there, sup with him, and gives the youth his leave to go with me. Mr. Archibald Johnston assures me for his charges, as well as my own. So my man James's foolish unthankfulness is turned about for my ten times better provision: I take this for a presage and ane erles (*earnest*) of God's goodness towards me all this voyage.

'We hope that Loudon's defluxion shall not hinder him to take journey on Tuesday. The morrow we intend but one other post to Darlington, and there stay till the Great Seal (*our Safe-conduct*) come to us. The Lord be with thee and my babies and all my flock and friends.

'Thy awne,

'R. BAILLIE.

'Durham, 6 November, Friday.'

'My Heart,—I know thou does now long to hear from me. I wrote to thee on Saturday was eight days [*dated* Friday], from Durham. That day we went to Darlington, where Mr. Alexander Henderson and Mr. Robert Blair did preach to us on Sunday. At supper on Sunday, the post, with the Great Seal of England for our safe-conduct, came to us; with the Earl of Bristol's letter to Loudon, entreating us to make haste.

'On Monday we came, before we lighted, to Boroughbridge, twenty-five miles. On Tuesday we rode three short posts, by Ferrybridge, to Doncaster.[1] There I was content to buy a bobbin waistcoat. On Wednesday we came another good journey to Newark-on-Trent, where we caused Dr. Moyslie sup with us. On Thursday we came to Stamford; on Friday

[1] Ferribrig, Toxford and Duncaster,' Baillie writes here; confusing the matter in his memory; putting Tuxford north of Doncaster, instead of south and subsequent.

to Huntingdon ; on Saturday to Ware ; here we rested the Sabbath and heard the minister, after we were warned of the end of the service, preach two good sermons,'—the *service* once well over, one gets notice, finds the sermons very fair !

'On Monday morning we came that twenty miles to London before sun-rising ;[1] all well, horse and man, as we could wish ; divers merchants and their servants with us on little naigs ; the way extremely foul and deep. Our journeys being so long and continued, and sundry of us unaccustomed with travel, we took it for God's singular goodness that all of us were so preserved : none in the company held better out than I and my man, and our little noble naigs. From Kilwinning to London, I did not so much as stumble : this is the fruit of your prayers. I was also all the way full of courage, and comforted with the sense of God's presence with my spirit. We were at great expenses on the road. Their inns are all like palaces ; no wonder they extorse their guests : for three meals, coarse enough, we would pay, together with our horses, sixteen or seventeen pound sterling. Some three dishes of creevishes (*écrivisses*), like little partans (*miniature lobsters*), two-and-forty shillings sterling.'—Save us !—'We lodge here in the Common Garden (*Covent Garden*) ; our house-mails (*rent*) every week above eleven pound sterling. The City is desirous we should lodge with them ; so to-morrow I think we must flit.

'All things here go as our heart could wish. The Lieutenant of Ireland (*Strafford*) came but on Monday to town, late ; on Tuesday, rested ; on Wednesday, came to Parliament ; but, ere night, he was caged. Intolerable pride and oppression cry to Heaven for vengeance.

'Tuesday here was a fast ; Mr. Blair and I preached to our Commissioners at home, for we had no clothes for outgoing. Many ministers used greater freedom than ever here was heard of. Episcopacy itself beginning to be cried-down, and a Covenant cried-up, and the Liturgy to be scorned. The town of London and a world of men mind to present a Petition, which I have seen, for the abolition of bishops, deans and all their appurtenances. It is thought good to delay till the Parliament have pulled-down Canterbury (*Laud*) and some prime bishops, which they mind to do so soon as the King has a little digested the bitterness of his Lieutenant's censure. Huge things are here in working ; the mighty Hand of God be about this great work !

[1] Sunrise on the 16th of November 1640.

We hope this shall be the joyful harvest of the tears that, these many years, have been sown in these Kingdoms. All here are weary of bishops. 'R. BAILLIE.

'London, 18 November, 1640.'

Weary of bishops, indeed; and 'creevishes' at such a price; and the Lord Lieutenant Strafford caged, and Canterbury to be pulled down, and everywhere a mighty drama going on: and thou, meanwhile, my Heart, put Rob to the school, give Harry and him some beginnings of wisdom, mind thy prayers, quit subdolous contracts, 'have a care of my little Lillie!' Poor little Lilias Baillie; tottering about there, with her foolish glad tattlement, with her laughing eyes, in drugget or other homespun frock, and antiquarian bib and tucker, far off in that old Manse of Kilwinning! But she grew to be tall enough, this little Lillie, and a mother, and a grandmother; and one of her grandsons was Henry Home Lord Kaimes;[1] whose memorial, and Lillie's, is still in this earth!

Greatly the most impressive of all the scenes Baillie witnessed in that mighty drama going on everywhere, was the Trial of Strafford. A truly impressive, momentous scene; on which Rushworth has gathered a huge volume, and then and since many men have written much; wherein, nevertheless, several features would have been lost, had not the Minister of Kilwinning, with his rustic open heart and seeing eyes, been there. It is the best scene of all he has painted, or hastily sign-painted, plastered and daubed. With careful industry, fishing as before from wide wastes of dim embroilment, let us snatch here and there a luminous fragment, and adjust them as is best possible; and therewith close our contemporaneous newspaper. Baillie's report, of immense length and haste, is to the Presbytery of Irvine, and dated May 1641. We give two earlier fractions first, from Letters to Mrs. Baillie. Strafford, on that fasting Tuesday, when the pulpits were so loud against bishops, was reposing from fatigues of travel. On the morrow he repaired to his place in Parliament, nothing doubting; 'but ere night he was caged:'

[1] Woodhouselee's *Life of Kaimes.*

Wednesday, 17 *November* 1640. 'The Lower House closed their doors; the Speaker keeped the keys till his accusation was concluded. Thereafter Mr. Pym went up, with a number at his back, to the Higher House; and in a short pretty speech, did, in name of the Lower House, and in name of the Commons of all England, accuse Thomas Earl of Strafford, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, of High Treason; and required his person to be arrested till probation might be heard. And so Pym and his train withdrew; and thereupon the Lords began to consult on that strange and unexpected motion.

'The word goes in haste to the Lord Lieutenant where he was with the King. With speed he comes to the House; he calls loudly at the door; James Maxwell, Keeper of the Black-rod, opens. His Lordship, with a proud glooming countenance, makes towards his place at the board-head; but at once many bid him void the House. So he is forced, in confusion, to go to the door till called again.'—Called again, 'he stands, but is commanded to kneel on his knees; after hearing their resolution, he offers to speak, but is commanded to be gone without a word.

'In the outer room, James Maxwell required him, as prisoner, to deliver his sword; when he had gotten it, he cries with a loud voice for his man "to carry my Lord Lieutenant's sword." This done, he makes through a number of people towards his coach; all gazing, no man capping to him, before whom, that morning, the greatest of England would have stood uncovered; all crying, "What is the matter?" He said, "A small matter, I warrant you!" They replied, "Yes, indeed, High Treason is a small matter!"

Saturday, January 30, 1641. 'The Lieutenant this day was sent for. He came from the Tower by water, with a guard of musketeers; the world wondering, and at his going out and coming in, shouting and cursing him to his face.

'Coming into the Higher House, his long Charge, in many sheets of paper, was read to him. For a while he sat on his knees before the bar; then after they caused him to sit down at the bar, for it was eight o'clock before all was read. He craved a month to answer.'

May 4, 1641. 'Reverend and dear Brethren,' * * 'The world now seeth that the delay is alone upon their side. Their constant attendance on Strafford is pretended to be the

cause ; and truly it is a great part of the reason why our business and all else has been so long suspended. Among many more, I have been ane assiduous assistant ; and therefore I will give you some account of what I have heard and seen in that most notable Process.

'Westminster Hall is a room as long, as broad, if not more, than the outer house of the High Church of Glasgow, supposing the pillars were all removed. In the midst of it was erected a stage, like to that prepared for our Assembly at Glasgow, but much larger ; taking up the breadth of the whole house from wall to wall, and of the length more than a third part.

'At the north end was set a throne for the King, a chair for the Prince ; before it lay a large woolsack, covered with green, for my Lord Steward, the Earl of Arundel ;[1] and then lower, two other woolsacks for my Lord Keeper and the Judges, with the rest of the Chancery, all in their red robes. Beneath this, a little table for four or five clerks of the Parliament in their black gowns. Round about these, some forms covered with green frieze, whereon the Earls and Lords did sit in their red robes, of that same fashion, lined with the same white ermine-skins, as you see the robes of our Lords when they ride in Parliament at Edinburgh. The Lords on their right sleeves have two bars of white skins ; the Viscounts two and ane half ; the Earls three ; the Marquess of Winchester three and ane half. England hath no more Marquesses ; and he but ane late upstart creature of Queen Elizabeth's.

'In front of these forms where the Lords sit, is a bar covered with green. At the one end of it standeth the Committee of eight or ten gentlemen appointed by the House of Commons to pursue (*prosecute*) ; at the midst there is a little desk, where the prisoner Strafford sits or stands as he pleaseth, together with his keeper, Sir William Balfour, the Lieutenant of the Tower. At the back of this is another desk for Strafford's four secretaries, who carry his papers, and assist him in writing and reading. At their side is a void for witnesses to stand. Behind them is a long desk, close to the wall of the room,[2] for Strafford's counsel-at-law, some five or six able Lawyers, who were not permitted to dispute in matter of fact, but questions of right, if any should be incident. This is the

[1] This is he of the *Arundel Marbles :* he went abroad next year.

[2] Temporary *wooden* wall ; from east to west, as Baillie counts the azimuths.

order of the House below on the floor; the same that is used daily in the House of Lords.

'Upon the two sides of the House, east and west, there arose a stage of eleven ranks of forms, the highest touching almost to the roof. Every one of these forms went from the one end of the room to the other, and contained about forty men. The two highest were divided from the rest by a rail; and a rail cutted-off from the rest, at every end, some seats. The gentlemen of the Lower House did sit within the rail; other persons without. All the doors were keeped very straitly with guards: we always behoved to be there a little after five in the morning. My Lord Willoughby Earl of Lindsey, Lord Chamberlain of England, ordered the House with great difficulty. James Maxwell, Black-rod, was great usher; a number of other servant gentlemen and knights attended. We, by favour, got place within the rail, among the Commons. The House was full daily before seven. Against eight the Earl of Strafford came in his barge from the Tower, accompanied by the Lieutenant and a guard of musketeers and halberdiers. The Lords in their robes were set about eight; the King was usually there half an hour before them.

'The King came not into his throne, for that would have marred the action; for it is the order of England, that when the King appears, he speaks what he will, and no other speaks in his presence. But at the back of the throne there were two rooms on the two sides; in the one did Duke de Vanden, Duke de Vallet,[1] and other French nobles sit; in the other the King, the Queen, Princess Mary, the Prince Elector, and some court ladies. The tirlies (*lattices*), that made them to be secret, the King brake down with his own hands; so they sat in the eye of all; but little more regarded than if they had been absent: for the Lords sat all covered; those of the Lower House, and all others, except the French noblemen, sat uncovered when the Lords came, and not else. A number of ladies were in boxes above the rails, for which they paid much money. It was daily the most glorious assembly the

[1] 'Duke de Vanden,' we presume, is Duc de Vendôme, left hand Brother of Charles's Queen; 'Vallet' is La Valette, who in 1642 became Duc d'Espernon succeeding his celebrated Father of that title. Two visitors of her Majesty. Notices of them, of their departure from the country by and by are in *Commons Journals*, ii. 670, 576 (13 July, 17 May, 1642), &c.

Isle could afford, yet the gravity not such as I expected. Oft great clamour without about the doors: in the intervals while Strafford was making ready for answers, the Lords got always to their feet, walked and clattered (*chatted*); the Lower-House men, too, loud clattering. In such sessions, ten hours long, there was much public eating, not only of confections, but of flesh and bread; bottles of beer and wine going thick from mouth to mouth, without cups; and all this in the King's eye: yea many but turned their back, and '—(Gracious Heavens!)—'through the forms they sat on. There was no outgoing to return; and oft the sitting was till two, three, or four o'clock.'

Strangely in this manner, no 'dignity of history' in the smallest obstructing us, do we look, through these rough-and-ready Scotch words, through these fresh Kilwinning eyes, upon the very body of the old Time, its form and pressure, its beer and wine bottles, its loud clattering and crowding. There it is, visually present: one feels as if, by an effort, one could hear it, handle it, speak with it. How different from the dreary vacuity of most 'philosophies teaching by experience' is the living picture of the fact; such as even a Boswell or a Baillie can give, if they will but honestly look! In spite of haste, we must continue a little further; catch a few more visualities:

'The *first session* was on Monday, March 22 (1641). All being set, as I have said, the Prince on a little chair at the side of the throne, the Chamberlain and Black-rod went and fetched-in my Lord Strafford. He was always in the same suit of black, as if in dool. At the entry he gave a low courtesy; proceeding a little, he gave a second; when he came to his desk, a third; then at the bar, the fore-face of his desk, he kneeled; rising quickly, he saluted both sides of the House, and sat down. Some few of the Lords lifted their hats to him. This was his daily carriage.

'My Lord Steward, in a sentence or two, showed That the House of Commons had accused the Earl of Strafford of high treason; that he was there to answer; that they might manage their evidence as they thought meet. They thereupon desired one of their clerks to read their impeachment. I sent you the printed copy long ago. The first nine articles, being but gen-

eralities, were passed; the twenty-eight of the farther impeachment were all read. The clerk's voice was small; and after the midst, being broken, was not heard by many.

'My Lord of Strafford was, in his answer, very large, accurate and eloquent. A preamble, wherein,' &c.: this he spoke; and then a long paper, of particular answers to the twenty-eight charges, was read. 'The reading of it took-up large three hours. His friends were so wary that they made three clerks read by turns, that every one might hear. . . . . After all, Strafford craved leave to speak; but the day being so far spent, to two or three o'clock, he was refused; and the Lord Steward adjourned the House till the morrow at eight.

'The *second session*, on Tuesday 23d. The King and Queen and all being set as the day before, Mr. Pym had a long and eloquent oration, only against the preamble of Strafford's answer, wherein he laboured to—' &c. &c. 'The first witness, Sir Pierce Crosby, who—' * * * 'When Pym had ended, the Earl required time, if it were but to the morrow, to answer so heavy charges, many whereof were new. After debate pro and contra, one of the Lords spake of adjourning their House; and pressed their privilege, that at the motion of any one Lord the House behoved to be adjourned. So the Lords did all retire to their own House above, and debated among themselves the question for a large half-hour. During their absence, though in the eye of the King, all fell to clattering, walking, eating, toying; but Strafford, in the midst of all the noise, was serious with his secretaries, conferring their notes and writing. The Lords returned; the Steward pronounced their decision: that the matters spoken being all of fact, and this only in answer to his own preamble, he should make an answer without any delay. So, without sign of repining, the Earl answered something to all had been said; instanced—' . . . .

'*Wednesday*, 24th. Mr. Maynard handled the first of the twenty-eight articles,' with witnesses, &c. In his reply the Earl first required permission to withdraw and collect himself: this was refused. He made ane excellent answer.'—'It were tedious to repeat all their quick passages.' 'The third article, "That he would make the King's little finger heavier than the loins of the law," this was proven by sundry. Among others, Sir David Foulis, whom he had crushed, came to depose. He excepted against this witness, as one who had a quarrel with him. Maynard produced against him his own decree, sub-

scribed by his own hand, that whereas Sir David had brought before *him* the same exception against a witness, he had decreed that a witness for the King and Commonwealth must be received, notwithstanding any private quarrels. When he saw his own hand, he said no more, but in a jesting way, "You are wiser, my Lord Steward, than to be ruled by any of *my* actions as patterns!"'

Or, quitting all order of 'sessions,' let us mark here and there, in 'this notable Process,' a characteristic feature, as we can gather it. Mark, in general, the noble lone lion at bay; mark the fierce, winged and taloned, toothed and rampant enemies, that in flocks, from above and from beneath, are dashing at him!

'My Lord of Strafford required, farther, to answer to things objected the former day; but was refused. He required permission to retire, and advise about the present objections; but all that he obtained was a little time's advisement in the place he was in. So hereafter, it was Strafford's constant custom, after the end of his adversary's speech, to petition for time of recollection; and obtaining it, to sit down with his back to the Lords, and most diligently read his notes, and write answers, he and his secretaries, for ane half-hour, in the midst of a great noise and confusion, which continued ever till he rose again to speak.'—

'For this he produced Sir William Pennyman as witness; a member of the Lower House, who, both here and many times else, deposed point-blank all he required. Mr. Maynard desired him to be posed (for no man there did speak to any other, but all speech was directed to my Lord Steward), "When, and at what time, he was brought to the remembrance of those words of my Lord Strafford's?" All of us thought it a very needless motion. Sir William answered, "Ever since the first speaking of them, they were in his memory; but he called them most to remembrance since my Lord Strafford was charged with them." Maynard presently catched him, "That he behoved, then, to be answerable to the House for neglect of duty; not being only silent, but voting with the rest to this article, wherein Strafford was charged with words whereof he knew he was free!" There arose, with the word, so great an hissing in the House, that the gentleman was confounded, and fell a-weeping.

'Strafford protested, He would rather commit himself to the mercy of God alone, giving over to use any witness in his defence at all, than that men, for witnessing the truth, should incur danger and disgrace on his account.'—

'So long as Maynard was principal speaker, Mr. Glyn lay at the wait, and usually observed some one thing or other; and uttered it so pertinently that, six or seven times in the end, he got great applause by the whole House.'—

'I did marvel much, at first, of their memories, that could answer and reply to so many large allegeances, without the missing of any one point; but I marked that both the Lieutenant when they spake, and the Lawyers when he spake, did write their notes; and in their speeches did look on those papers. Yea, the most of the Lords and Lower House did write much daily, and none more than the King.'

'My Lord Montmorris was called to depose, in spite of Strafford's exception.' * * * 'In his answers Strafford alleged, concerning Lord Montmorris, the confession of his fault under his own hand;' 'that no evil was done to him, and nothing intended but the amendment of his very loose tongue:—if the gentlemen of the Commons House intended no more but the correction of *his* foolish tongue, he would heartily give them thanks!'—

' * * Concerning the Lord Deputy's scutching of a gentleman with a rod.' * *

'The other part of the article was his executing one Thomas Dennitt, who after a long want of pay, craving it from his captain, was bidden be gone to the gallows. He went his way, but was brought back, and said to have stolen ane quarter of beef: for this he is sentenced to die, and albeit some noblemen had moved the Deputy's lady to be earnest for his life, yet without mercy he was execute.'—

'Glyn showed That daily there came to their hands so much new matter of Strafford's injustice, that if they had their articles to frame again, they would give-in as many new as old. Strafford stormed at that, and proclaimed them ane open defiance. Glyn took him at his word; and offered instantly to name three-and-twenty cases of injustice, wherein his own gain was clear. He began quickly his catalogue with Parker's *paper petition*. Strafford, finding himself in ane ill taking, did soon repent of his passionate defiance, and required he

might answer to no more than he was charged with in his paper. (Seventh session, 29th March.)

'Strafford said, "That though his bodily infirmity was great, and the charge of treason lay heavy on his mind; yet that his accusation came from the honourable House of Commons, this did most of all pierce through his soul." Maynard alleged "That he (Strafford), by the flow of his eloquence, spent time to gain affection;"—as, indeed, with the more simple sort, especially the ladies, he daily gained much. He replied quickly, "That rhetoric was proper to these gentlemen, and learning also; that betwixt the two he was like to have a hard bargain." Bristol was busy in the mean time, going up and down, and whispering in my Lord Steward's ear; whereupon others, not content cried, "To your places, to your places, my Lords!"'—

'Maynard applied it vehemently, that he had subverted law and brought-in ane arbitrary power on the subjects' goods for his own gain.'

'Mr. Glyn showed, "The Earl of Strafford was now *better* than his word: he had not only made Acts of State equal to Acts of Parliament, but also his own acts above both."'

'He (Strafford) answered, "That his intention in this matter was certainly good;" "that when he found the people's untowardness, he gave over the design." Maynard answered, "that intentions cleared not illegal actions; that his giving-over before *tens* of thousands were starved, maketh him not innocent of the killing of thousands,"'—sarcastic Learned-sergeant!

'The Earl of Clare and others debated with Vane (the elder Vane) sharply, What "*this* kingdom" did mean; England, or only perhaps Scotland? Maynard quickly silenced him: "Do you ask, my Lord, if this kingdom be this kingdom or not?"'

My learned friends! most swift, sharp are you; of temper most accipitral,—hawkish, aquiline, not to say vulturish; and will have this noble lamed lion made a dead one, and carrion useful for you!—Hear also Mr. Stroud, the honourable Member, standing 'at the end of the bar covered with green cloth,' one of the 'eight or ten gentlemen appointed to prosecute,' how shrill he is:

'The Deputy said, "If this was a treason, being informed as he was, it behoved him to be a traitor over again, if he had

the like occasion." * * * Mr. Stroud took notice of Strafford's profession to do this over again. He said, "He well believed him; but they knew what the kingdom suffered when Gaveston came to react himself!"'

This honourable Member is one of the Five whom Charles himself, some months afterwards, with a most irregular *non*-constabulary force in his train, sallied down to the House to seek and seize,—remembering this, perhaps, and other services of his! But to proceed:

'My Lord Strafford regretted to the Lords the great straits of his estate. He said "he had nothing there but as he borrowed." Yet daily he gave to the guard that conveyed him ten pound, by which he conciliated much favour; for these fellows were daily changed, and wherever they lived, they talked of his liberality. He said, "his family were, in Ireland, two-hundred-and-sixty persons, and the House of Commons there had seized all his goods. Would not their Lordships take course to loose that arrest from so much of his goods as might sustain his wife and children in some tolerable way?"' (Thirteenth session, 3d April.)

'Garraway, Mayor the last year, deposed, "That to the best of his remembrance, he (Strafford) said no good would be gotten till some of the Aldermen were hanged." While Strafford took vantage at the words, *to the best of my remembrance*, Garraway turned shortly to him, and told out punctually, "My Lord, you did say it!" Strafford thereupon, "He should answer with as great truth, albeit not with so great confidence, as that gentleman, to the best of his remembrance he did *not* speak so. But if he did, he trusted their goodness would easily pardon such a rash and foolish word."'

'*Thursday*, 8th April; *session fourteenth*. The twenty-eighth article they passed. All being set and the deputy brought to the bar on his knees, he was desired to say for himself what he would, that so the House of Commons may sum-up all before the sentence.' He craved time till to-morrow. The Commons objected. 'Yet the Lords, after some debate, did grant it.'—

'The matter was' (*sixteenth session*), 'Young Sir Harry Vane had fallen by accident among his father's papers'—Ah yes, a well-known accident! And now the question is, Will the

Lords allow us to produce it? 'The Lords adjourn one hour large: at their return their decree was against the expectation of all;'—an ambiguous decree, tending obliquely towards refusal, or else new unknown periods of delay!

'At once the Commons began to grumble. Glyn posed him, On *what* articles he would examine witnesses, then? They did not believe that he wanted to examine witnesses, but put him to name the articles. He named one,—another,—a third,—a fourth; and not being like to make ane end, the Commons on both sides of the House rose in a fury, with a shout of "Withdraw! Withdraw! Withdraw!"—got all to their feet, on with their hats, cocked their beavers in the King's face. We all did fear it would grow to a present tumult. They went all away in confusion. Strafford slipped-off to his barge and to the Tower, glad to be gone lest he should be torn in pieces; the King went home in silence; the Lords to their house.'

Session sixteenth vanishes thus, in a flash of fire! Yes; and the 'sharp untunable voice' of Mr. O. Cromwell, member for Cambridge, was in that shout of "Withdraw!" and Mr. Cromwell dashed-on his rusty beaver withal, and strode out so,—in those wide nostrils of his a kind of snort. And one Mr. Milton sat in his house, by St. Bride's Church, teaching grammar, writing Areopagitics; and had dined that day, not perhaps without criticism of the cookery. And it was all a living coloured Time, not a gray vacant one; and had length, breadth and thickness, even as our own has!—But now, also, is not that a *miraculous* spy-glass, that Perceptive-Faculty, Soul, Intelligence, or whatsoever we call it, of the Reverend Mr. Robert Baillie of Kilwinning? We still *see* by it,—things stranger than most preternaturalisms, and mere commonplace 'apparitions,' could be. "Our Fathers, where are they?" Why, *there;* there are our far-off Fathers, face to face; alive,—and yet not alive; ah no, they are visible but *un*attainable, sunk in the never-returning Past! Thrice endeavouring, we cannot *embrace* them; *ter manus effugit imago.* The Centuries are transparent, then;—yes, more or less; but they are impermeable, impenetrable, no adamant so hard. It is strange. *To be, To have been:* of all verbs the wonderful-

lest is that same. The '*Time*-element,' the 'crystal prison!' Of a truth, to us Sons of Time, it is the miracle of miracles. —These thoughts are thrown-out for the benefit of the curious.

One thing, meanwhile, is growing plain enough to everybody: those fiery Commons, with their "Withdraw! Withdraw!" will have the life of that poor prisoner. If not by free verdict of their Lordships, then by bill of attainder of their own; by fair means, or by less fair, Strafford has to die. 'Intolerable pride and oppression cry to Heaven for vengeance.' Yes, and Heaven has heard; and the Earth now repeats it, in Westminster Hall here,—nay, worse still, out in Palaceyard, with 'horrible cries and imprecations! This noble baited lion shall not escape, but perish,—be food for learned sergeants and the region kites! We will give but one other glimpse of him: his last appearance in Westminster Hall, that final Speech of his there; 'which,' says Baillie, 'you have in print.' We have indeed: printed in *Whitlocke*, and very copiously elsewhere and since;—probably the best of all Speeches, everything considered, that has yet been printed in the English tongue. All readers remember that passage,—that pause, with tears in the 'proud glooming countenance,' at thought of "those pledges a saint in Heaven left me." But what a glare of new fatal meaning does the last circumstance, or shadow of a circumstance, which Baillie mentions, throw over it:

'He made a Speech large two hours and ane half. * * * To all he repeated naught new, but the best of his former answers. And in the end, after some lashness and fagging, he made such ane pathetic oration, for ane half-hour, as ever comedian did upon a stage. The matter and expression were exceeding brave: doubtless, if he had grace or civil goodness, he is a most eloquent man. One passage made it most spoken of: his breaking-off in weeping and silence when he spoke of his first Wife. Some took it for a true defect of his memory; others, and the most part, for a notable part of his rhetoric; some that true grief and remorse at that remembrance had stopped his mouth. For they say that his first Lady, the

Earl of Clare's sister, being with child, and finding one of his whore's letters, brought it to him, and chiding him therefor, he strook her on the breast, whereof shortly she died.'

Such is the drama of Life, seen in Baillie of Kilwinning; a thing of multifarious tragic and epic meanings, then as now. A many-voiced tragedy and epos, yet with broad-based comic and grotesque accompaniment; done by actors *not* in buskins;—ever replete with elements of guilt and remorse, of pity, instruction and fear! It is now two-hundred years and odd months since these Commons Members, shouting "Withdraw! Withdraw!" took away the life of Thomas Wentworth Earl of Strafford; and introduced, driven by necessity *they* knew little whither, horrid rebellions, as the phrase went, and suicidal wars into the bowels of this country. On our horizon too, there loom now inevitabilities no less stern; one knows not sometimes whether not very near at hand! They had the *Divine Right of Kings* to settle, those unfortunate ancestors of ours: shall Charles Stuart and William Laud alone have a soul and conscience in this Nation, under extant circumstances; or shall others too have it? That had come now to require settlement, that same 'divine right;' and they, our brave ancestors, like true stalwart hearts, did on hest of necessity manage to settle it,—by cutting-off its head, if no otherwise.

Alas, we, their children, have got perhaps a still harder thing to settle: the *Divine Right of Squires.* Did a God make this land of Britain, and give it to us all, that we might live there by honest labour; or did the Squires make it, and,—shut to the voice of any God, open only to a Devil's voice in this matter,—decide on giving it to themselves alone? This is now the sad question and 'divine right' we, in this unfortunate century, have got to settle! For there is no end of settlements; there will never be an end; the best settlement is but a temporary, partial one. Truly, all manner of rights, and adjustments of work and wages, here below, do verge gradually into error, into unbearable error, as the Time-flood bears us onward; and many a *right*, which used to be a duty

done, and *divine* enough, turns out, in a new latitude of the Time-voyage, to have grown now altogether undivine! Turns out,—when the fatal hour and necessity for overhauling it arrives,—to have been, for some considerable while past, an inanity, a conventionality, a hollow simulacrum of use-and-wont; which, if it will still assert itself as a 'divine right,' having now no divine duty to do, becomes a diabolic wrong; and, by soft means or by sharp, has to be sent travelling out of this world! Alas, 'intolerabilities' do now again in this new century 'cry to Heaven;'—or worse, do not cry, but in low wide-spread moan, lie as perishing, as if 'in Heaven there was no ear for them, and on Earth no ear.' 'Elevenpence halfpenny a-week' in this world; and in the next world *zero!* And 'Sliding-Scales, and endless wrigglings and wrestlings over mere 'Corn-Laws:' a Governing Class, hired (it appears) at the rate of some fifty or seventy millions a-year, which not only makes no attempt at governing, but will not, by any consideration, passionate entreaty, or even menace as *yet*, be persuaded to eat its victuals, shoot its partridges, and not strangle-out the general life by *mis*governing! It cannot and it will not come to good.

We here quit Baillie: we let his drop-scene fall; and finish, though not yet in mid-course of his Great-Rebellion Drama. To prevent disappointment, we ought to say, that this of Strafford is considerably the best passage of his Book; —and indeed, generally, once more, that the careless reader will not find much profit in him; that except by reading with unusual *intensity*, even the historical student may find less than he expects. As a true, rather opulent, but very confused quarry, out of which some edifice might in part be built, we leave him to those who have interest in such matters.

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

ESSAYS

COLLECTED AND REPUBLISHED

BY

THOMAS CARLYLE

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DR. FRANCIA.

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DR. FRANCIA.

THE South-American Revolution, and set of revolutions, a great confused phenomenon; worthy of better knowledge than men have of it. (p. 7). —Liberator Bolivar, a much-enduring and many-counselled man. Of General San Martin, too, there is something to be said: His march over the Andes into Chile; a feat worth looking at. Might not the Chilenos as well have *taken* him for their Napoleon? Don Ambrosio O Higgins: His industry and skill in road-making. O Higgins the Second: Governing a rude business everywhere; but in South America of quite primitive rudeness. Ecclesiastic Vampire bats. An immense increase of soap-and-water, the basis of all improvements in Chile. (8). —By far the notablest of these South-American phenomena, Dr. Francia and his Dictatorship in Paraguay. Nothing could well shock the constitutional mind like this tawny-visaged, lean, inexorable Dr. Francia. Our chief source of information about him, a little Book by Messrs. Rengger and Longchamp: An endless merit in a man's knowing when to have done. The Messrs. Robertson, and their *Francia's Reign of Terror* and other books: Given a cubic inch of Castile soap, to lather it up in water so as to fill a wine-puncheon. How every idle volume flies abroad like idle thistle-down; frightful to think of, were it not for reap-hook and rake. In all human likelihood this sanguinary tyrant of Paraguay did mean *something*, could we in quietness ascertain What. (17). —Francia born about the year 1757; of Portuguese or French extraction. Intended for a priest. Subject to the terriblest fits of hypochondria Sent to the University of Cordova in Tucuman. Lank sallow boys in the Tucuman and other high seminaries, often dreadfully ill-dealt with, as times go: So much is unspeakable; and a most strange Universe, this, to be born into! Francia, arrived at man's years, changes from Divinity to Law. Had doubtless gained some insight into the veritable workings of the Universe: Endless heavy fodderings of Jesuit-theology he did not take-in. French-Encyclopedic influences, and Gospel according to Volney, Jean-Jacques and Company: An *ill-fed*, ghastly-looking flame; but a needful, and even kind of sacred one. Francia perhaps the best and justest Advocate that ever took briefs in that distant Assumpcion City. The people of that profuse climate in careless abundance, troubling themselves about few things: One art they seem to have perfected, that of riding. Their lives, like empty capacious bottles, calling to the Heavens and the earth, and to all Dr. Francias who may pass that way. Francia a lonesome, down-looking man, apt to be solitary even in the press of men: Passes everywhere for a man of veracity, punctuality, of iron methodic rigour and rectitude.

A Law-case; an unjust judge discomfited. Francia's quarrel with his Father. A most barren time: Not so much as a pair of Andalusian eyes, that can *lasso* him permanently. But now, far over the waters there have been Federations, Sansculottism: In the new Hemisphere, too, arise wild projects, armed gatherings, invasions and revolts. A new figure of existence is cut-out for the Assumpcion Advocate. (26).—Not till a year after, did the Paraguenos, by spontaneous movement resolve on a career of freedom. National Congress: Papers 'compiled chiefly out of Rollin's *Ancient History*.' Paraguay Republic: Don Fulgencio Yegros, President; two Assessors; Francia, Secretary. Alas, these Guacho populations are greedy, superstitious, vain, mendacious: We know for certain but of one man who would do himself an injury, to do a just or true thing under that sun. Secretary Francia flings-down his papers, and retires again into privacy: An accidental meeting; description of the man, and of his library. The reign of liberty becomes unendurable: A second Congress got together: Fulgencio and Francia, joint Consuls. Next year, a third Congress; and Francia gets himself declared Dictator. He never assembled any Congress more; having stolen the constitutional palladiums, and got his wicked will! (39).—A great improvement did, nevertheless, in all quarters forthwith show itself: Every official in Paraguay had to bethink him, and begin actually doing his work. The land had peace; a rabid dog-kennel wide as South America raging round it, but kept-out as by lock-and-key. A Conspiracy to start with the massacre of Dr. Francia and others, whatever it might close with: Francia not a man to be trifled-with in plots. It was in this stern period he executed above forty persons. A visitation of locusts: Two harvests in one season. (44).—Sauerteig's sunglances into the matter. No Reform, whether of an individual or a nation, can be effected without stern suffering, stern working: Ility it cannot be done by 'tremendous cheers.' What they say about 'love of power:' Love of 'power' to make flunkeys come and go for you! A true man must tend to be king of his own world. This Paraguay got the one veracious man it had, to take lease of it. Funeral Eulogium, by the Reverend Manuel Perez: Life is sacred, thinks his Reverence; but there is something more sacred still. Dictator Francia, a man whose worth and meaning are not soon exhausted. His efforts to rebuild the City of Assumpcion. His desire to open a trade with the English Nation,—foolishly supposed to be represented, and made accessible, in the House of Commons: Francia's unreasonable detestation of a man who was not equal to his word. (47).—His sore struggle with imaginary workmen, cleric and laic: In despair he erected his 'Workman's Gallows:' Such an institution of society, adapted to our European ways, everywhere pressingly desirable. O Guachos, South-American and European, what a business is it, casting-out your Seven Devils! (57).—Francia; as he looked and lived, managing that thousandfold business for his Paraguenos, and keeping a sharp eye for assassins. His treatment of M. Ponpland; of his old enemy Artigas: His rumoured conduct to his dying Father. His interest in any kind of intelligent human creature, when such by rarest chance could be fallen-in with. So lived, so laboured Dictator Francia; and had no rest but in Eternity. O Francia, though thou hadst to execute some forty persons, I am not without some pity for thee! (60).

DR. FRANCIA.[1]

[1843.]

The confused South-American Revolution, and set of revolutions, like the South-American Continent itself, is doubtless a great confused phenomenon; worthy of better knowledge than men yet have of it. Several books, of which we here name a few known to us, have been written on the subject: but bad books mostly, and productive of almost no effect. The heroes of South America have not yet succeeded in picturing any image of themselves, much less any true image of themselves, in the Cis-Atlantic mind or memory.

Iturbide, 'the Napoleon of Mexico,' a great man in that narrow country, who was he? He made the thrice-celebrated 'Plan of Iguala;' a constitution of no continuance. He be-

[1] Foreign Quarterly Review, No. 62.—*Funeral Discourse delivered on occasion of celebrating the Obsequies of his late Excellency the Perpetual Dictator of the Republic of Paraguay, the Citizen Dr. José Gaspar Francia: by Citizen the Rev. Manuel Antonio Perez, of the Church of the Incarnation, on the 20th of October* 1840. (In the *British Packet and Argentine News*, No. 813. Buenos-Ayres, March 19, 1842.)

2. *Essai Historique sur la Révolution de Paraguay, et le Gouvernement Dictatorial du Docteur Francia.* Par MM. Rengger et Longchamp. Seconde édition. Paris, 1827.

3. *Letters on Paraguay.* By J. P. and W. P. Robertson. 2 vols. Second Edition. London, 1839.

4. *Francia's Reign of Terror.* By the same. London, 1839.

5. *Letters on South America.* By the same. 3 vols. London, 1843.

6. *Travels in Chile and La Plata.* By John Miers. 2 vols. London, 1826.

7. *Memoirs of General Miller, in the Service of the Republic of Peru.* 2 vols. Second Edition. London, 1829.

came Emperor of Mexico, most serene 'Augustin I.;' was deposed, banished to Leghorn, to London; decided on returning;—landed on the shore of Tampico, and was there met, and shot: this, in a vague sort, is what the world knows of the Napoleon of Mexico, most serene Augustin the First, most unfortunate Augustin the Last. He did himself publish memoirs or memorials,[1] but few can read them. Oblivion, and the deserts of Panama, have swallowed this brave Don Augustin: *vate caruit sacro.*

And Bolivar, 'the Washington of Columbia,' Liberator Bolivar, he too is gone without his fame. Melancholy lithographs represent to us a long-faced, square-browed man; of stern, considerate, *consciously* considerate aspect, mildly aquiline form of nose; with terrible angularity of jaw; and dark deep eyes, somewhat too close together (for which latter circumstance we earnestly hope the lithograph alone is to blame): this is Liberator Bolivar:—a man of much hard fighting, hard riding, of manifold achievements, distresses, heroisms and histrionisms in this world; a many-counselled, much-enduring man; now dead and gone;—of whom, except that melancholy lithograph, the cultivated European public knows as good as nothing. Yet did he not fly hither and thither, often in the most desperate manner, with wild cavalry clad in blankets, with War of Liberation 'to the death?' Clad in blankets, *ponchos* the South Americans call them: it is a square blanket, with a short slit in the centre, which you draw over your head, and so leave hanging: many a liberative cavalier has ridden, in those hot climates, without further dress at all; and fought handsomely too, wrapping the blanket round his arm, when it came to the charge.

With such cavalry, and artillery and infantry to match, Bolivar has ridden, fighting all the way, through torrid deserts, hot mud-swamps, through ice-chasms beyond the curve of perpetual frost,—more miles than Ulysses ever sailed: let the coming Homers take note of it. He has marched over the Andes, more than once; a feat analogous

[1] *A Statement of some of the principal Events in the Public Life of Augustin de Iturbide: written by Himself.* London, 1843.

to Hannibal's; and seemed to think little of it. Often beaten, banished from the firm land, he always returned again, truculently fought again. He gained, in the Cumana regions, the 'immortal victory' of Carababo and several others; under him was gained the finishing 'immortal victory' of Ayacucho in Peru, where Old Spain, for the last time, burnt powder in those latitudes, and then fled without return. He was Dictator, Liberator, almost Emperor, if he had lived. Some three times over did he, in solemn Columbian parliament, lay down his Dictatorship with Washington eloquence; and as often, on pressing request, take it up again, being a man indispensable. Thrice, or at least twice, did he, in different places, painfully construct a Free Constitution; consisting of 'two chambers, and a supreme governor for life with liberty to name his successor,' the reasonablest democratic constitution you could well construct; and twice, or at least once, did the people, on trial, declare it disagreeable. He was, of old, well known in Paris; in the dissolute, the philosophico-political and other circles there. He has shone in many a gay Parisian *soirée*, this Simon Bolivar; and in his later years, in autumn 1825, he rode triumphant into Potosi and the fabulous Inca Cities, with clouds of feathered Indians somersaulting and war-whooping round him,'[1]—and, 'as the famed *Cerro*, metalliferous Mountain, came in sight, the bells all pealed out, and there was a thunder of artillery,' says General Miller! If this is not a Ulysses, Polytlas and Polymetis, a much-enduring and many-counselled man; where was there one? Truly a Ulysses whose history were worth its ink,—had the Homer that could do it made his appearance!

Of General San Martin too, there will be something to be said. General San Martin, when we last saw him, twenty years ago or more,—through the organs of the authentic stedfast Mr. Miers,—had a handsome house in Mendoza, and 'his own portrait, as I remarked, hung up between those of Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington.' In Mendoza, cheerful, mudbuilt, whitewashed Town, seated at the eastern base of the Andes, 'with its shady public-walk well paved and

[1] *Memoirs of General Miller.*

swept;' looking out pleasantly, on this hand, over wide horizons of Pampa Wilderness; pleasantly, on that, to the Rock-chain, *Cordillera* they call it, of the sky-piercing Mountains, capt in snow, or with volcanic fumes issuing from them: there dwelt General *Ex-Generalissimo* San Martin, ruminating past adventures over half the world; and had his portrait hung up between Napoleon's and the Duke of Wellington's.

Did the reader ever hear of San Martin's march over the Andes into Chile? It is a feat worth looking at; comparable, most likely, to Hannibal's march over the Alps, while there was yet no Simplon or Mont-Cénis highway; and *it* transacted itself in the year 1817. South-American armies think little of picking their way through the gullies of the Andes: so the Buenos-Ayres people, having driven-out their own Spaniards, and established the reign of freedom though in a precarious manner, thought it were now good to drive the Spaniards out of Chile, and establish the reign of freedom there also instead; whereupon San Martin, commander at Mendoza, was appointed to do it. By way of preparation, for he began from afar, San Martin, while an army is getting ready at Mendoza, assembles 'at the Fort of San Carlos by the Aguanda river,' some days' journey to the south, all attainable tribes of the Pehuenche Indians, to a solemn *Palaver*, so they name it, and civic entertainment, on the esplanade there. The ceremonies and deliberations, as described by General Miller, are somewhat surprising: still more the concluding civic-feast; which lasts for three days; which consists of horses' flesh for the solid part, and horses' blood with ardent spirits *ad libitum* for the liquid, consumed with such alacrity, with such results, as one may fancy. However, the women had prudently removed all the arms beforehand; nay, 'five or six of these poor women, taking it by turns, were always found in a sober state, watching over the rest;' so that comparatively little mischief was done, and only 'one or two' deaths by quarrel took place.

The Pehuenches having drunk their ardent-water and horses' blood in this manner, and sworn eternal friendship to

San Martin, went home, and—communicated to his enemies, across the Andes, the road he meant to take. This was what San Martin had foreseen and meant, the knowing man! He hastened his preparations, got his artillery slung on poles, his men equipt with knapsacks and haversacks, his mules in readiness; and, in all stillness, set forth from Mendoza by *another* road. Few things in late war, according to General Miller, have been more noteworthy than this march. The long straggling line of soldiers, six-thousand and odd, with their quadrupeds and baggage, winding through the heart of the Andes, breaking for a brief moment the old abysmal solitudes!—For you fare along, on some narrow roadway, through stony labyrinths; huge rock-mountains hanging over your head, on this hand; and under your feet, on that, the roar of mountain-cataracts, horror of bottomless chasms;—the very winds and echoes howling on you in an almost preternatural manner. Towering rock-barriers rise sky-high before you, and behind you, and around you; intricate the outgate! The roadway is narrow; footing none of the best. Sharp turns there are, where it will behove you to mind your paces; one false step, and you will need no second; in the gloomy jaws of the abyss you vanish, and the spectral winds howl requiem. Somewhat better are the suspension-bridges, made of bamboo and leather, though they swing like see-saws: men are stationed with lassos, to gin you dextrously, and fish you up from the torrent, if you trip there.

Through this kind of country did San Martin march; straight towards San Iago, to fight the Spaniards and deliver Chile. For ammunition-wagons, he had *sorras*, sledges, canoe-shaped boxes, made of dried bull's-hide. His cannons were carried on the back of mules, each cannon on two mules judiciously harnessed: on the packsaddle of your foremost mule there rested with firm girths a long strong pole; the other end of which (*forked* end, we suppose) rested, with like girths, on the packsaddle of the hindmost mule; your cannon was slung with leathern straps on this pole, and so travelled, swaying and dangling, yet moderately secure. In the knapsack of each soldier was eight days' provender, dried beef

ground into snuff-powder, with a modicum of pepper, and some slight seasoning of biscuit or maize-meal; 'store of onions, of garlic,' was not wanting: Paraguay tea could be boiled at eventide, by fire of scrub-bushes, or almost of rock-lichens or dried mule-dung. No further baggage was permitted: each soldier lay, at night, wrapt in his *poncho*, with his knapsack for pillow, under the canopy of heaven; lullabied by hard travail; and sank soon enough into steady nose-melody, into the foolishest rough colt-dance of unimaginable Dreams. Had he not left much behind him in the Pampas,—mother, mistress, what not; and was like to find somewhat, if he ever got across to Chile living? What an entity, one of those night-leaguers of San Martin; all steadily snoring there, in the heart of the Andes, under the eternal stars! Wayworn sentries with difficulty keep themselves awake; tired mules chew barley rations, or doze on three legs; the feeble watch-fire will hardly kindle a cigar; Canopus and the Southern Cross glitter down; and all snores steadily, begirt by granite deserts, looked-on by the Constellations in that manner! San Martin's improvident soldiers ate-out their week's rations almost in half the time; and for the last three days, had to rush on, spurred by hunger: this also the knowing San Martin had foreseen; and knew that they could bear it, these rugged *Guachos* of his; nay that they would march all the faster for it. On the eight day, hungry as wolves, swift and sudden as a torrent from the mountains, they disembogued, straight towards San Iago, to the astonishment of men;—struck the doubly astonished Spaniards into dire misgivings; and then, in pitched fight, after due manœuvres, into total defeat on the 'plains of Maypo,' and again, positively for the last time, on the plains or heights of 'Chacabuco;' and completed the 'deliverance of Chile,' as was thought, forever and a day.

Alas, the 'deliverance' of Chile was but commenced; very far from completed. Chile, after many more deliverances, up to this hour, is always but 'delivered' from one set of evil-doers to another set!—San Martin's manœuvres to liberate Peru, to unite Peru and Chile, and become some Washington-

Napoleon of the same, did not prosper so well. The suspicion of mankind had to rouse itself; Liberator Bolivar had to be called in; and some revolution or two to take place in the interim. San Martin sees himself peremptorily, though with courtesy, complimented over the Andes again; and in due leisure, at Mendoza, hangs his portrait between Napoleon's and Wellington's. Mr. Miers considered him a fairspoken, obliging, if somewhat artful man. Might not the Chilenos as well have *taken* him for their Napoleon? They have gone farther, and, as yet, fared little better!

The world-famous General O'Higgins, for example, he, after some revolution or two, became Director of Chile; but so terribly hampered by 'class-legislation' and the like, what could he make of it? Almost nothing! O'Higgins is clearly of Irish breed; and, though a Chileno born, and 'natural son of Don Ambrosio O'Higgins, formerly the Spanish Viceroy of Chile,' carries his Hibernianism in his very face. A most cheery, jovial, buxom countenance, radiant with pepticity, good-humour and manifold effectuality in peace and war! Of his battles and adventures let some luckier epic-writer sing or speak. One thing we Foreign Reviewers will always remember: his father's immense merits towards Chile in the matter of Highways. Till Don Ambrosio arrived to govern Chile, some half-century ago, there probably was not a made road of ten miles long from Panama to Cape Horn. Indeed, except his roads, we fear there is hardly any yet. One omits the old Inca causeways, as too narrow (being only three feet broad), and altogether unfrequented in the actual ages. Don Ambrosio made, with incredible industry and perseverance and skill, in every direction, roads, roads. From San Iago to Valparaiso, where only surefooted mules with their packsaddles carried goods, there can now wooden-axled cars loud-sounding, or any kind of vehicle, commodiously roll. It was he that shaped these passes through the Andes, for most part; hewed them out from mule-tracks into roads, certain of them. And think of his *casuchas*. Always on the higher inhospitable solitudes, at every few miles' distance, stands a trim brick cottage, or *casucha*, into which the forlorn traveller introducing

himself, finds covert and grateful safety ; nay food and refection,—for there are 'iron boxes' of pounded beef or other provender, iron boxes of charcoal ; to all which the traveller, having bargained with the Post-office authorities, carries a key.[1] Steel and tinder are not wanting to him, nor due iron skillet, with water from the stream : there he, striking a light, cooks hoarded victual at eventide, amid the lonely pinnacles of the world, and blesses Governor O'Higgins. With 'both hands,' it may be hoped,—if there is vivacity of mind in him :

> Had you seen this road before it was made,
> You would lift both your hands, and bless General Wade !

It affects one with real pain to hear from Mr. Miers, that the War of Liberty has half ruined these O'Higgins *casuchas*. Patriot soldiers, in want of more warmth than the charcoal-box could yield, have not scrupled to tear-down the door, door-case, or whatever wooden thing could be come at, and burn it, on the spur of the moment. The storm-stayed traveller, who sometimes, in threatening weather, has to linger here for days, 'for fifteen days together,' does not lift both his hands, and bless the Patriot soldier !

Nay, it appears, the O'Higgins roads, even in the plain country, have not, of late years, been repaired, or in the least attended to, so distressed was the finance department ; and are now fast verging towards impassability and the condition of mule-tracks again. What a set of animals are men and Chilenos ! If an O'Higgins did not now and then appear among them, what would become of the unfortunates ? Can you wonder that an O'Higgins sometimes loses temper with them ; *shuts* the persuasive outspread hand, clutching some sharpest hide-whip, some terrible sword of justice or gallows-lasso therewith, instead,—and becomes a Dr. Francia now and then ! Both the O'Higgins and the Francia, it seems probable, are phases of the same character ; both, one begins to fear, are indispensable from time to time, in a world inhabited by men and Chilenos !

[1] Miers.

As to O'Higgins the Second, Patriot, Natural-son O'Higgins, he, as we said, had almost no success whatever as a governor; being hampered by class-legislation. Alas, a governor in Chile cannot succeed. A governor there has to resign himself to the want of success; and should say, in cheerful interrogative tone, like that Pope elect, who showing himself on the balcony, was greeted with mere howls, "*Non piacemmo al popolo?*"—and thereupon proceed cheerfully to the *next* fact. Governing is a rude business everywhere; but in South America it is of quite primitive rudeness: they have no parliamentary way of changing ministries as yet; nothing but the rude primitive way of hanging the old ministry on gibbets, that the new may be installed! Their government has altered its name, says the sturdy Mr. Miers, rendered sulky by what he saw there: altered its name, but its nature continues as before. Shameless peculation, malversation, that is their government: oppression formerly by Spanish officials, now by native haciendados, land-proprietors,—the thing called justice still at a great distance from them, says the sulky Mr. Miers!—Yes, but coming always, answer we; every new gibbeting of an old ineffectual ministry bringing justice somewhat nearer. Nay, as Miers himself has to admit, certain improvements are already indisputable. Trade everywhere, in spite of multiplex confusions, has increased, is increasing: the days of somnolent monopoly and the old Acapulco Ship are gone, quite over the horizon. Two good, or partially good measures, the very necessity of things has everywhere brought about in those poor countries: clipping of the enormous bat-wings of the Clergy, and emancipating of the Slaves. Bat-wings, we say; for truly the South-American clergy had grown to be as a kind of bat-vampires:—readers have heard of that huge South-American bloodsucker, which fixes its bill in your circulating vital-fluid as you lie *asleep*, and there sucks; waving you with the motion of its detestable leather wings into ever deeper sleep; and so drinking, till *it* is satisfied, and you—do not awaken any more! The South-American governments, all in natural feud with the old church-dignitaries, and likewise all in great straits for cash, have everywhere confiscated the mon-

asteries, cashiered the disobedient dignitaries, melted the superfluous church-plate into piastres; and, on the whole, shorn the *wings* of their vampire; so that if it still suck, you will at least have a chance of awakening before death!—Then again, the very want of soldiers of liberty led to the emancipating of blacks, yellows and other coloured persons: your mulatto, nay your negro, if well drilled, will stand fire as well as another.

Poor South-American emancipators; they began with Volney, Raynal and Company, at that gospel of Social Contract and the Rights of Man; under the most unpropitious circumstances; and have hitherto got only to the length we see. Nay now, it seems, they do possess 'universities,' which are at least schools with other than monk teachers; they have got libraries, though as yet almost nobody reads them,—and our friend Miers, repeatedly knocking at all doors of the Grand Chile National Library, could never to this hour discover where the key lay, and had to content himself with looking-in through the windows.[1] Miers, as already hinted, desiderates unspeakable improvements in Chile;—desiderates, indeed, as the basis of all, an immense increase of soap-and-water. Yes, thou sturdy Miers, dirt is decidedly to be removed, whatever improvements, temporal or spiritual, may be intended next! According to Miers, the open, still more the secret personal nastiness of those remote populations, rises almost towards the sublime. Finest silks, gold brocades, pearl necklaces and diamond eardrops, are no security against it: alas, all is not gold that glitters; somewhat that glitters is mere putrid fish-skin! Decided, enormously increased appliance of soap-and water, in all its branches, with all its adjuncts; this, according to Miers, would be an improvement. He says also ('in his haste,' as is probable, like the Hebrew Psalmist), that all Chileno men are liars; all, or to appearance, all! A people that uses almost no soap, and speaks almost no truth, but goes about in that fashion, in a state of personal nastiness, and also of spiritual nastiness, approaching the sublime; such people is not easy to govern well!—

[1] *Travels in Chile.*

But undoubtedly by far the notablest of all these South-American phenomena is Dr. Francia and his Dictatorship in Paraguay; concerning whom, and which, we have now more particularly to speak. Francia and his 'reign of terror' have excited some interest, much vague wonder in this country; and especially given a great shock to constitutional feeling. One would rather wish to know Dr. Francia;—but unhappily one cannot! Out of such a murk of distracted shadows and rumours, in the other hemisphere of the world, who would pretend at present to decipher the real portraiture of Dr. Francia and his Life? None of us can. A few credible features, wonderful enough, original enough in our constitutional time, will perhaps to the impartial eye disclose themselves; these, with some endeavour to interpret these, may lead certain readers into various reflections, constitutional and other, not entirely without benefit.

Certainly, as we say, nothing could well shock the constitutional feeling of mankind, as Dr. Francia has done. Dionysius the tyrant of Syracuse, and indeed the whole breed of tyrants, one hoped, had gone many hundred years ago, with their reward; and here, under our own nose, rises a new 'tyrant,' claiming also *his* reward from us! Precisely when constitutional liberty was beginning to be understood a little, and we flattered ourselves that by due ballot-boxes, by due registration-courts, and bursts of parliamentary eloquence, something like a real National Palaver would be got-up in those countries,—arises this tawny-visaged, lean, inexorable Dr. Francia; claps you an embargo on all that; says to constitutional liberty, in the most tyrannous manner, Hitherto, and no farther! It is an undeniable, though an almost incredible fact, that Francia, a lean private individual, Practitioner of Law, and Doctor of Divinity, did, for twenty or near thirty years, stretch out his rod over the foreign commerce of Paraguay, saying to it, Cease! The ships lay high and dry, their pitchless seams all yawning on the clay-banks of the Parana; and no man could trade but by Francia's license. If any person entered Paraguay, and the Doctor did not like his papers, his talk, conduct, or even the cut of his face,—it might be the

worse for such person! Nobody could leave Paraguay on any pretext whatever. It mattered not that you were man of science, astronomer, geologer, astrologer, wizard of the north; Francia heeded none of these things. The whole world knows of M. Aimé Bonpland; how Francia seized him, descending on his tea-establishment in Entre Rios, like an obscene vulture, and carried him into the interior, contrary even to the law of nations; how the great Humboldt and other high persons expressly applied to Dr. Francia, calling on him, in the name of human science, and as it were under penalty of reprobation, to liberate M. Bonpland; and how Dr. Francia made no answer, and M. Bonpland did not return to Europe, and indeed has never yet returned. It is also admitted that Dr. Francia had a gallows, had jailors, law-fiscals, officials; and executed, in his time, 'upwards of forty persons,' some of them in a very summary manner. Liberty of private judgment, unless it kept its mouth shut, was at an end in Paraguay. Paraguay lay under interdict, cut-off for above twenty years from the rest of the world, by a new Dionysius of Paraguay. All foreign commerce had ceased; how much more all domestic constitution-building! These are strange facts. Dr. Francia, we may conclude at least, was not a common man but an uncommon.

How unfortunate that there is almost no knowledge of him procurable at present! Next to none. The Paraguenos can in many cases spell and read, but they are not a literary people; and, indeed, this Doctor was, perhaps, too awful a practical phenomenon to be calmly treated of in the literary way. Your Breughel paints his sea-storm, not while the ship is labouring and cracking, but after he is got to shore, and is safe under cover! Our Buenos-Ayres friends, again, who are not without habits of printing, lay at a great distance from Francia, under great obscurations of quarrel and controversy with him; their constitutional feeling shocked to an extreme degree by the things he did. To them, there could little intelligence float down, on those long muddy waters, through those vast distracted countries, that was not more or less of a distracted nature; and then from Buenos-Ayres over into

Europe, there is another long tract of distance liable to new distractions. Francia, Dictator of Paraguay, is, at present, to the European mind, little other than a chimera ; at best, the statement of a puzzle, to which the solution is still to seek. As the Paraguenos, though not a literary people, can many of them spell and write, and are not without a discriminating sense of true and untrue, why should not some real *Life of Francia*, from those parts, be still possible ! If a writer of genius arise there, he is hereby invited to the enterprise. Surely in all places your writing genius ought to rejoice over an acting genius, when he falls-in with such ; and say to himself : "Here or nowhere is the thing for me to write of ! Why do I keep pen-and-ink at all, if not to apprise men of this singular acting genius, and the like of him ? My fine-arts and æsthetics, my epics, literatures, poetics, if I will think of it, do all at bottom mean either that or else nothing whatever ! "

Hitherto our chief source of information as to Francia is a little Book, the Second on our List, set forth in French some sixteen years ago, by the Messrs. Rengger and Longchamp. Translations into various languages were executed :—of that into English, it is our painful duty to say that no man, except in case of extreme necessity, shall use it as reading. The translator, having little fear of human detection, and seemingly none at all of divine or diabolic, has done his work even unusually ill ; with ignorance, with carelessness, with dishonesty prepense ; coolly *omitting* whatsoever he *saw* that he did not understand :—poor man, if he yet survive, let him reform in time ! He has made a French book, which was itself but lean and dry, into the most wooden of English false books ; doing evil as he could in that matter ;—and claimed wages for it, as if the feat deserved *wages* first of all ! Reformation, even on the small scale, is highly necessary.

The Messrs. Rengger and Longchamp were, and we hope still are, two Swiss Surgeons ; who in the year 1819 resolved on carrying their talents into South America, into Paraguay, with views towards 'natural history,' among other things. After long towing and struggling in those Parana floods, and

distracted provinces, after much detention by stress of weather and of war, they arrived accordingly in Francia's country; but found that, without Francia's leave, they could not quit it again. Francia was now a Dionysius of Paraguay. Paraguay had grown to be, like some mousetraps and other contrivances of art and nature, easy to enter, impossible to get out of. Our brave Surgeons, our brave Rengger (for it is he alone of the two that speaks and writes) reconciled themselves; were set to doctoring of Francia's soldiery, of Francia's self; collected plants and beetles; and, for six years, endured their lot rather handsomely: at length, in 1825, the embargo was for a time lifted, and they got home. This Book was the consequence. It is not a good book, but at that date there was, on the subject, no other book at all; nor is there yet any other better, or as good. We consider it to be authentic, veracious, moderately accurate; though lean and dry, it is intelligible, rational; in the French original, not unreadable. We may say it embraces, up to the present date, all of importance that is yet known in Europe about the Doctor Despot; add to this its indisputable *brevity;* the fact that it can be read sooner by several hours than any other *Dr. Francia:* these are its excellences,—considerable, though wholly of a comparative sort.

After all, brevity is the soul of wit! There is an endless merit in a man's knowing when to have done. The stupidest man, if he will be brief in proportion, may fairly claim some hearing from us: he too, the stupidest man, has seen something, heard something, which is his own, distinctly peculiar, never seen or heard by any man in this world before; let him tell us that, and if it were possible, *nothing* more than that,—he, brief in proportion, shall be welcome!

The Messrs. Robertson, with their *Francia's Reign of Terror*, and other books on South America, have been much before the world of late; and failed not of a perusal from this Reviewer; whose next sad duty it now is to say a word about them. The Messrs. Robertson, some thirty or five-and-thirty years ago, were two young Scotchmen, from the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, as would seem; who, under

fair auspices, set-out for Buenos-Ayres, and thence for Paraguay, and other quarters of that remote continent, in the way of commercial adventure. Being young men of vivacity and open eyesight, they surveyed with attentive view those convulsed regions of the world; wherein it was evident that revolution raged not a little; but also that precious metals, cowhides, Jesuits' bark, and multiplex commodities, were nevertheless extant; and iron or brazen implements, ornaments, cotton and woollen clothing, and British manufactures not a few, were objects of desire to mankind. The Brothers Robertson, acting on these facts, appear to have prospered, to have extensively flourished in their commerce; which they gradually extended up the River Plate, to the city of the Seven Streams or Currents (*Corrientes* so-called), and higher even to Assumpcion, metropolis of Paraguay; in which latter place, so extensive did the commercial interests grow, it seemed at last expedient that one or both of the prosperous Brothers should take up his personal residence. Personal residence accordingly they did take up, one or both of them, and maintain, in a fluctuating way, now in this city, now in that, of the De la Plata, Parana or Paraguay country, for a considerable space of years. How many years, in precise arithmetic, it is impossible, from these inextricably complicated documents now before us, to ascertain. In Paraguay itself, in Assumpcion city itself, it is very clear, the Brothers Robertson, did successively or simultaneously, in a fluctuating inextricable manner, live for certain years; and occasionally saw Dr. Francia with their own eyes,—though, to them or others, he had not yet become notable.

Mountains of cow and other hides, it would appear, quitted those countries by movement of the Brothers Robertson, to be worn-out in Europe as tanned boots and horse-harness, with more or less satisfaction,—not without due profit to the merchants, we shall hope. About the time of Dr. Francia's beginning his 'reign of terror,' or earlier it may be (for there are no dates in these inextricable documents), the Messrs. Robertson were lucky enough to take final farewell of Paraguay, and carry their commercial enterprises into other quar-

ters of that vast continent, where the reign was not of terror. Their voyagings, counter-voyagings, comings and goings, seem to have been extensive, frequent, inextricably complex; to Europe, to Tucuman, to Glasgow, to Chile, to Laswade and elsewhither; too complex for a succinct intelligence, as that of our readers has to be at present. Sufficient for us to know, that the Messrs. Robertson did bodily, and for good, return to their own country some few years since; with what net result of cash is but dimly adumbrated in these documents; certainly with some increase of knowledge,—had the unfolding of it but been brief in proportion! Indisputably the Messrs. Robertson had somewhat to tell: their eyes had seen some new things, of which their hearts and understandings had taken hold more or less. In which circumstances the Messrs. Robertson decided on publishing a Book. Arrangements being made, Two Volumes of *Letters on Paraguay* came out, with due welcome from the world, in 1839.

We have read these *Letters* for the first time lately: a Book of somewhat *aqueous* structure: immeasurably thinner than one could have wished; otherwise not without merit. It is written in an offhand, free-flowing, very artless, very incorrect style of language, of thought, and of conception; breathes a cheerful, eupeptic, social spirit, as of adventurous South-American Britons, worthy to succeed in business; gives one, here and there, some visible concrete feature, some lively glimpse of those remote sunburnt countries; and has throughout a kind of bantering humour or quasi-humour, a joviality and healthiness of heart, which is comfortable to the reader, in some measure. A Book not to be despised in these dull times: one of that extensive class of books which a reader can peruse, so to speak, 'with one eye shut and the other not open;' a considerable luxury for some readers. These *Letters on Paraguay* meeting, as would seem, a unanimous approval, it was now determined by the Messrs. Robertson that they would add a Third Volume, and entitle it *Dr. Francia's Reign of Terror*. They did so, and this likewise the present Reviewer has read. Unluckily the Authors had, as it were, nothing

more whatever to say about Dr. Francia, or next to nothing; and under this condition, it must be owned they have done their Book with what success was well possible. Given a cubic inch of respectable Castile soap, To lather it up in water so as to fill one puncheon wine-measure, this is the problem; let a man have credit, of its kind, for doing his problem! The Messrs. Robertson have picked almost every fact of significance from *Rengger and Longchamp*, adding some not very significant reminiscences of their own; this is the square inch of soap: you lather it up in Robertsonian loquacity, joviality, Commercial-Inn banter, Leading-Article philosophy, or other aqueous vehicles, till it fills the puncheon, the Volume of four-hundred pages, and say "There!" The public, it would seem, did not fling even this in the face of the venders, but bought it as a puncheon filled; and the consequences are already here: Three Volumes more on *South America*, from the same assiduous Messrs. Robertson! These also, in his eagerness, this present Reviewer has read; and has, alas, to say that they are simply the old volumes in new vocables, under a new figure. Intrinsically all that we did not already know of these Three Volumes,—there are craftsmen of no great eminence who will undertake to write it in one sheet! Yet there they stand, Three solid-looking Volumes, a thousand printed pages and upwards; three puncheons *more* lathered out of the old square inch of Castile soap! It is too bad. A necessitous ready-witted Irishman sells you an indifferent gray-horse; steals it overnight, paints it black, and sells it to you again on the morrow; *he* is haled before judges, sharply cross-questioned, tried and almost executed, for such adroitness in horse-flesh: but there is no law yet as to books!

M. de la Condamine, about a century ago, was one of a world-famous company that went into those equinoctial countries, and for the space of nine or ten years did exploits there. From Quito to Cuença, he measured you degrees of the meridian, climbed mountains, took observations, had adventures; wild Creoles opposing Spanish nescience to human science; wild Indians throwing down your whole cargo of instruments occasionally in the heart of remote deserts, and

striking work there.' M. de la Condamine saw bull-fights at Cuença, five days running ; and on the fifth day, saw his unfortunate too audacious surgeon massacred by popular tumult there. He sailed the entire length of the Amazons River, in Indian canoes ; over narrow Pongo rapids, over infinite mud-waters, the infinite tangled wilderness with its reeking desolation on the right hand of him and on the left ;—and had mischances, adventures, and took celestial observations all the way, and made remarks ! Apart altogether from his meridian degrees, which belong in a very strict sense to World-history and the advancement of all Adam's sinful posterity, this man and his party saw and suffered many hundred times as much of mere romance adventure as the Messrs. Robertson did :—Madame Godin's passage down the Amazons, and frightful life-in-death amid the howling forest-labyrinths, and wrecks of her dead friends, amounts to more adventure of itself than was ever dreamt of in the Robertsonian world. And of all this M. de la Condamine gives pertinent, lucid and conclusively intelligible and credible account in one very small octavo volume ; not quite the eighth part of what the Messrs. Robertson have already written, in a not pertinent, not lucid or conclusively intelligible and credible manner. And the Messrs. Robertson talk repeatedly, in their last Volumes, of writing still other Volumes on Chile, 'if the public will encourage.' The Public will be a monstrous fool if it do. The Public ought to stipulate first, that the real new knowledge forthcoming there about Chile be separated from the knowledge or ignorance already known ; that the preliminary question be rigorously put, Are several volumes the space to hold it, or a small fraction of one volume ?

On the whole, it is a sin, good reader, though there is no Act of Parliament against it ; an indubitable *male*faction or crime. No mortal has a right to wag his tongue, much less to wag his pen, without saying something : he knows not what mischief he does, past computation ; scattering words without meaning,—to afflict the whole world yet, before they cease !

[1] Condamine : *Relation d'un Voyage dans l Intérieur de l'Amérique méridionale.*

For thistle-down flies abroad on all winds and airs of wind: idle thistles, idle dandelions, and other idle products of Nature or the human mind, propagate themselves in that way; like to cover the face of the earth,—did not man's indignant providence, with reap-hook, with rake, with autumnal steel-and-tinder, intervene. It is frightful to think how every idle volume flies abroad like an idle globular downbeard, embryo of new millions; every word of it a potential seed of infinite new downbeards and volumes: for the mind of man is voracious, is feracious; germinative, above all things, of the downbeard species! Why, the Author-corps in Great Britain, every soul of them *inclined* to grow mere dandelions if permitted, is now supposed to be about ten thousand strong; and the reading-corps, who read merely to escape from themselves, with one eye shut and the other not open, and will put-up with almost any dandelion, or thing which they can read *without* opening both their eyes, amounts to twenty-seven millions all but a few! O could the Messrs. Robertson, spirited, articulate-speaking men, once know well in what a comparatively blessed mood you close your brief, intelligent, conclusive M. de la Condamine, and feel that you have passed your evening well and nobly, as in a temple of wisdom,—not ill and disgracefully, as in brawling tavern supper-rooms, with fools and noisy persons,—ah, in that case, perhaps the Messrs. Robertson would write their new Work on Chile in *part* of a volume!

But enough of this Robertsonian department; which we must leave to the Fates and Supreme Providences. These spirited, articulate-speaking Robertsons are far from the worst of their kind; nay, among the best, if you will;—only unlucky in this case, in coming across the autumnal steel and tinder! Let it cease to rain angry sparks on them: enough now, and more than enough. To cure that unfortunate department by philosophical criticism—the attempt is most vain. Who will dismount, on a hasty journey, with the day declining, to attack mosquito-swarms with the horsewhip? Spur swiftly through them; breathing perhaps some pious prayer to Heaven. By the horsewhip they cannot be killed. Drain-out the swamps where they are bred,—Ah, couldst thou do something towards

that! And in the mean while: How to get on with this of Dr. Francia?

The materials, as our reader sees, are of the miserablest: mere intricate inanity (if we accept poor wooden *Rengger*), and little more; not facts, but broken shadows of facts; clouds of confused bluster and jargon;—the whole still more bewildered in the *Robertsons*, by what we may call a running shriek of constitutional denunciation, 'sanguinary tyrant,' and so forth. How is any picture of Francia to be fabricated out of that? Certainly, first of all, by *omission* of the running shriek! This latter we shall totally omit. Francia, the sanguinary tyrant, was not bound to look at the world through Rengger's eyes, through Parish Robertson's eyes, but faithfully through his own eyes. We are to consider that, in all human likelihood, this Dionysius of Paraguay did mean something; and then to ask in quietness, What? The running shriek once hushed, perhaps many things will compose themselves, and straggling fractions of information, almost infinitesimally small, may become unexpectedly luminous!

An unscientific Cattle-breeder and tiller of the earth, in some nameless *chacra* not far from the City of Assumpcion, was the Father of this remarkable human individual; and seems to have evoked him into being sometime in the year 1757. The man's name is not known to us; his very nation is a point of controversy: Francia himself gave him out for an immigrant of French extraction; the popular belief was, that he had wandered over from Brazil. Portuguese or French, or both in one, he produced this human individual, and had him christened by the name of José Gaspar Rodriguez Francia, in the year above mentioned. Rodriguez, no doubt, had a Mother too; but her name also, nowhere found mentioned, must be omitted in this delineation. Her name, and all her fond maternities, and workings and sufferings, good brown lady, are sunk in dumb forgetfulness; and buried there along with her, under the twenty-fifth parallel of Southern Latitude; and no British reader is required to interfere with them! José Rodriguez must have been a loose-made

tawny creature, much given to taciturn reflection; probably to crying humours, with fits of vehement ill-nature: such a subject, it seemed to the parent Francia cautiously reflecting on it, would of all attainable trades, be suitablest for preaching the Gospel, and doing the Divine Offices, in a country like Paraguay. There were other young Francias; at least one sister and one brother in addition; of whom the latter by-and-by went mad. The Francias, with their adust character, and vehement French-Portuguese blood, had perhaps all a kind of aptitude for madness. The Dictator himself was subject to the terriblest fits of hypochondria, as your adust 'men of genius' too frequently are! The lean Rodriguez, we fancy, may have been of a devotional turn withal; born half a century earlier, he had infallibly been so. Devotional or not, he shall be a Priest, and *do* the Divine Offices in Paraguay, perhaps in a very unexpected way.

Rodriguez having learned his hornbooks and elementary branches at Assumpcion, was accordingly despatched to the University of Cordova in Tucuman, to pursue his curriculum in that seminary. So far we know, but almost no farther. What kind of curriculum it was, what lessons, spiritual-spoonmeat, the poor lank sallow boy was crammed with, in Cordova High Seminary; and how he took to it, and pined or throve on it, is entirely uncertain. Lank sallow boys in the Tucuman and other high seminaries are often dreadfully ill-dealt with, in respect of their spiritual-spoonmeat, as times go! Spoon-poison you might often call it rather: as if the object were to make them Mithridateses, able to *live* on poison? Which may be a useful art too, in its kind? Nay, in fact, if we consider it, these high seminaries and establishments exist there, in Tucuman and elsewhere, not for that lank sallow boy's special purposes, but for their own wise purposes; they were made and put together, a long while since, without taking the smallest council of the sallow boy! Frequently they seem to say to him, all along: "This precious thing that lies in thee, O sallow boy, of 'genius' so-called, it may to thee and to eternal Nature be precious; but to us and to temporary Tucuman it is not precious, but pernicious, dead-

ly : we require thee to quit this, or expect penalties!" And yet the poor boy, how can he quit it; eternal Nature herself, from the depths of the Universe, ordering him to go on with it? From the depths of the Universe, and of his own Soul, latest revelation of the Universe, he is, in a silent, imperceptible, but irrefragable manner, directed to go on with it,—and has to go, though under penalties. Penalties of very death, or worse! Alas, the poor boy, so willing to obey temporary Tucumans, and yet unable to disobey eternal Nature, is truly to be pitied. Thou shalt be Rodriguez Francia! cries Nature, and the poor boy to himself. Thou shalt be Ignatius Loyola, Friar Ponderoso, Don Fatpauncho Usandwonto! cries Tucuman. The poor creature's whole boyhood is one long lawsuit : Rodriguez Francia against All Persons in general. It is so in Tucuman, so in most places. You cannot advise effectually into what high seminary he had best be sent; the only safe way is to bargain beforehand, that he have force born with him sufficient to make itself good against all persons in general!

Be this as it may, the lean Francia prosecutes his studies at Cordova, waxes gradually taller towards new destinies. Rodriguez Francia, in some kind of Jesuit skullcap and black college serge gown, a lank rawboned creature, stalking with a downlook through the irregular public streets of Cordova in those years, with an infinitude of painful unspeakabilities in the interior of him, is an interesting object to the historical mind. So much is unspeakable, O Rodriguez; and it is a most strange Universe this thou hast been born into; and the theorem of Ignatius Loyola and Don Fatpauncho Usandwonto seems to me to hobble somewhat! Much is unspeakable; lying within one, like a dark lake of doubt, of Acherontic dread, leading down to Chaos itself. Much is unspeakable, answers Francia; but somewhat also is speakable,—this for example : That I will not be a Priest in Tucuman in these circumstances; that I should like decidedly to be a secular person rather, were it even a Lawyer rather! Francia, arrived at man's years, changes from Divinity to Law. Some say it was in Divinity that he graduated, and got his Doctor's

hat; Rengger says, Divinity; the Robertsons, likelier to be incorrect, call him Doctor of Laws. To our present readers it is all one, or nearly so. Rodriguez quitted the Tucuman *Alma Mater*, with some beard on his chin, and reappeared in Assumpcion to look-out for practice at the bar.

What Rodriguez had contrived to learn, or grow to, under this his *Alma Mater* in Cordova, when he quitted her? The answer is a mere guess; his curriculum, we again say, is not yet known. Some faint smattering of Arithmetic, or the everlasting laws of Numbers; faint smattering of Geometry, everlasting laws of Shapes; these things, we guess, not altogether in the dark, Rodriguez did learn, and found extremely remarkable. Curious enough: That round Globe put into that round Drum, to touch it at the ends and all round, it is precisely as if you clapt 2 into the inside of 3, not a jot more, not a jot less: wonder at it, O Francia; for in fact it is a thing to make one pause! Old Greek Archimedeses, Pythagorases, dusky Indians, old nearly as the hills, detected such things; and they have got across into Paraguay, into this brain of thine, thou happy Francia. How is it too, that the Almighty Maker's Planets run, in those heavenly spaces, in paths which are conceivable in thy poor human head as Sections of a Cone? The thing thou conceivest as an Ellipsis, the Almighty Maker has set his Planets to roll in that. Clear proof, which neither Loyola nor Usandwonto can contravene, that *Thou* too art denizen of this Universe; that Thou too, in some inconceivable manner, wert present at the Council of the Gods!—Faint smatterings of such things Francia did learn in Tucuman. Endless heavy fodderings of Jesuit theology, poured on him and round him by the wagon-load, incessantly, and year after year, he did not learn; but left flying there as shot-rubbish. On the other hand, some slight inkling of human grammatical vocables, especially of French vocables, seems probable. French vocables; bodily garment of the *Encyclopédie* and Gospel according to Volney, Jean-Jacques and Company; of infinite import to Francia!

Nay is it not, in some sort, beautiful to see the sacred flame of ingenuous human curiosity, love of knowledge, awakened,

amid the damp somnolent vapours, real and metaphorical, the damp tropical poison-jungles, and fat Lethean stupefactions and entanglements, even in the heart of a poor Paraguay Creole? Sacred flame, no bigger yet than that of a farthing rushlight, and with nothing but secondhand French class-books in Science, and in Politics and Morals nothing but the Raynals and Rousseaus, to feed it:—an *ill*-fed, lank-quavering, most blue-coloured, almost ghastly-looking flame; but a needful one, a kind of sacred one even that. Thou shalt love knowledge, search what *is* the *truth* of this God's Universe; thou art privileged and bound to love it, to search for it, in Jesuit Tucuman, in all places that the sky covers; and shalt try even Volneys for help, if there be no other help! This poor blue-coloured inextinguishable flame in the soul of Rodriguez Francia, there as it burns better or worse, in many figures, through the whole life of him, is very notable to me. Blue flame though it be, it has to burn-up considerable quantities of poisonous lumber from the general face of Paraguay; and singe the profound impenetrable forest-jungle, spite of all its brambles and lianas, into a very black condition,—intimating that there shall be decease and removal on the part of said forest-jungle; peremptory removal; that the blessed Sunlight shall again look-in upon his cousin Earth, tyrannously hidden from him for so many centuries now! Courage, Rodriguez!

Rodriguez, indifferent to such remote considerations, successfully addicts himself to law-pleadings, and general private studies, in the City of Assumpcion. We have always understood he was one of the best Advocates, perhaps the very best, and what is still more, the justest that ever took briefs in that country. This the Robertsonian *Reign of Terror* itself is willing to admit, nay repeatedly asserts, and impresses on us. He was so just and true, while a young man; gave such divine prognostics of a life of nobleness; and then, in his riper years, so belied all that! Shameful to think of: he bade fair, at one time, to be a friend-of-humanity of the first water; and then gradually, hardened by political success and love of power, he became a mere ravenous ghoul, or solitary thief in the night; stealing the constitutional palladiums from their par-

liament-houses,—and executed upwards of forty persons! Sad to consider what men and friends-of-humanity will turn to!

For the rest, it is not given to this or as yet to any editor, till a Biography arrive from Paraguay, to shape-out with the smallest clearness, a representation of Francia's existence as an Assumpcion Advocate; the scene is so distant, the conditions of it so unknown. Assumpcion City, near three-hundred years old now, lies in free-and-easy fashion on the left bank of the Parana River; embosomed among fruit-forests, rich tropical umbrage; thick wood round it everywhere,—which serves for defence too against the Indians. Approach by which of the various roads you will, it is through miles of solitary shady avenue, shutting-out the sun's glare; overcanopying, as with grateful green awning, the loose sand-highway,—where, in the early part of this Century (date undiscoverable in those intricate Volumes), Mr. Parish Robertson, advancing on horseback, met one cart driven by a smart brown girl, in red bodice, with long black hair, not unattractive to look upon; and for a space of twelve miles, no other articulate-speaking thing whatever.[1]

The people of that profuse climate live in a careless abundance, troubling themselves about few things; build what wooden carts, hide-beds, mud-brick houses are indispensable; import what of ornamental lies handiest abroad; exchanging for it Paraguay tea in sewed goatskins. Riding through the town of Santa Fé, with Parish Robertson, at three in the afternoon, you will find the entire population just risen from its siesta; slipshod, half-buttoned; sitting in its front verandahs open to the street, eating pumpkins with voracity,—sunk to the ears in pumpkins; imbibing the grateful saccharine juices, in a free-and-easy way. They look up at the sound of your hoofs, not without good-humour. Frondent trees parasol the streets,—thanks to Nature and the Virgin. You will be welcome at their *tertulias*,—a kind of '*swarrie*,' as the Flunkey says, 'consisting of flirtation and the usual trimmings: *swarrie* on the table about seven o'clock.' Before this,

[1] *Letters on Paraguay.*

the whole population, it is like, has gone to bathe promiscuously, and cool and purify itself in the Parana : promiscuously ; but you have all got linen bathing-garments, and can swash about with some decency ; a great relief to the human tabernacle in those climates. At your *tertulia,* it is said, the Andalusian eyes, still bright to this tenth or twelfth generation, are destructive, seductive enough, and argue a soul that would repay cultivating. The beautiful half-savages ; full of wild sheet-lightning, which might be made continuously luminous ! Tertulia well over, you sleep on hide-stretchers, perhaps here and there on a civilised mattress, within doors or on the housetops.

In the damp flat country parts, where the mosquitoes abound, you sleep on high stages, mounted on four poles, forty feet above the ground, attained by ladders ; so high, blessed be the Virgin, no mosquito can follow to sting,—it is a blessing of the Virgin or some other. You sleep there, in an indiscriminate arrangement, each in his several *poncho* or blanket-cloak ; with some saddle, deal-box, wooden log, or the like, under your head. For bed-tester is the canopy of everlasting blue ; for night-lamp burns Canopus in his infinite spaces ; mosquitoes cannot reach you, if it please the Powers. And rosy-fingered Morn, suffusing the east with sudden red and gold, and other flame-heraldry of swift-advancing Day, attenuates all dreams ; and the Sun's first level light-volley sheers away sleep from living creatures everywhere ; and living men do then awaken on their four-post stage there, in the Pampas,—and might begin with prayer if they liked, one fancies ! There is an altar decked on the horizon's edge yonder, is there not ; and a cathedral wide enough ?—How, overnight, you have defended yourself against vampires, is unknown to this Editor.

The Guacho population, it must be owned, is not yet fit for constitutional liberty. They are a rude people ; lead a drowsy life, of ease and sluttish abundance,—one shade, and but one, above a dog's life, which is defined as 'ease and scarcity.' The arts are in their infancy ; and not less the virtues. For equipment, clothing, bedding, household furniture and general out-

fit of every kind, those simple populations depend much on the skin of the cow; making of it most things wanted, lasso bolas, ship-cordage, rimmings of cart-wheels, spatterdashes beds and house-doors. In country places they sit on the skull of the cow: General Artigas was seen, and spoken with, by one of the Robertsons, sitting among field-officers, all on cow-skulls, toasting stripes of beef, and 'dictating to three secretaries at once.'[1] They sit on the skull of the cow in country places; nay they heat themselves, and even burn lime, by igniting the carcass of the cow.

One art they seem to have perfected, and one only—that of riding. Astley's and Ducrow's must hide their head, and all glories of Newmarket and Epsom dwindle to extinction, in comparison of Guacho horsemanship. Certainly if ever Centaurs lived upon the earth, these are of them. They stick-on their horses as if both were one flesh; galloping where there seems hardly path for an ibex; leaping like kangaroos, and flourishing their nooses and bolases the while. They can whirl themselves round under the belly of the horse, in cases of war-stratagem, and stick fast, hanging-on by the mere great toe and heel. You think it is a drove of wild horses galloping up: on a sudden, with wild scream, it becomes a troop of Centaurs with pikes in their hands. Nay, they have the skill, which most of all transcends Newmarket, of riding on horses that are *not* fed; and can bring fresh speed and alacrity out of a horse, which, with you, was on the point of lying down. To ride on three horses with Ducrow they would esteem a small feat: to ride on the broken-winded fractional part of one horse, that is the feat! Their huts abound in beef, in reek also, and rubbish; excelling in dirt most places that human nature has anywhere inhabited. Poor Guachos! They drink Paraguay tea, sucking it up in succession, through the same tin pipe, from one common skillet. They are hospitable, sooty, leathery, lying, laughing fellows; of excellent talent in their sphere. They have stoicism, though ignorant of Zeno; nay stoicism coupled with real gaiety of heart. Amidst their reek and wreck, they

[1] *Letters on Paraguay.*

laugh loud, in rough jolly banter ; they twang, in a plaintive manner, rough love-melodies on a kind of guitar ; smoke infinite tobacco ; and delight in gambling and ardent-spirits, ordinary refuge of voracious empty souls. For the same reason, and a better, they delight also in Corpus-Christi ceremonies, mass-chantings, and devotional performances. These men are fit to be drilled into something ! Their lives stand there like empty capacious bottles, calling to the heavens and the earth, and all Dr. Francias who may pass that way : " Is there nothing to put into us, then? Nothing but nomadic idleness, Jesuit superstition, rubbish, reek, and dry stripes of tough beef?" Ye unhappy Guachos,—yes, there is something other, there are several things other, to put into you ! But withal, you will observe, the seven devils have first to be put out of you : Idleness, lawless Brutalness, Darkness, Falseness—seven devils or more. And the way to put something into you is, alas, not so plain at present ! Is it,—alas, on the whole, is it not perhaps to lay good horsewhips lustily *upon* you, and cast out these seven devils as a preliminary?

How Francia passed his days in such a region, where philosophy, as is too clear, was at the lowest ebb? Francia, like Quintus Fixlein, had 'perennial fire-proof joys, namely, employments.' He had much Law-business, a great and ever-increasing reputation as a man at once skilful and faithful in the management of causes for men. Then, in his leisure hours, he had his Volneys, Raynals ; he had second-hand scientific treatises in French ; he loved to 'interrogate Nature,' as they say ; to possess theodolites, telescopes, star-glasses,—any kind of glass or book, or gazing implement whatever, through which he might try to catch a glimpse of Fact in this strange Universe : poor Francia ! Nay, it is said, his hard heart was not without inflammability ; was sensible to those Andalusian eyes still bright in the tenth or twelfth generation. In such case too, it may have burnt, one would think, like anthracite, in a somewhat ardent manner. Rumours to this effect are afloat ; not at once incredible. Pity there had not been some Andalusian pair of eyes, with speculation, depth and soul enough in the rear of them to

fetter Dr. Francia permanently, and make a house-father of him. It had been better; but it befell not. As for that light-headed, smart, brown girl whom, twenty years afterwards, you saw selling flowers on the streets of Assumpcion, and leading a light life, is there any certainty that she was Dr. Francia's daughter? Any certainty that, even if so, he could and should have done something considerable for her?[1] Poor Francia, poor light-headed, smart, brown girl,—this present Reviewer cannot say!

Francia is a somewhat lonesome, downlooking man, apt to be solitary even in the press of men; wears a face not unvisited by laughter, yet tending habitually towards the sorrowful, the stern. He passes everywhere for a man of veracity, punctuality, of iron methodic rigour; of iron rectitude, above all. 'The skilful lawyer,' 'the learned lawyer,' these are reputations; but the 'honest lawyer!' This Law-case was reported by the Robertsons before they thought of writing a *Francia's Reign of Terror*, with that running shriek, which so confuses us. We love to believe the anecdote, even in its present loose state, as significant of many things in Francia:

'It has been already observed that Francia's reputation, as a lawyer, was not only unsullied by venality, but conspicuous for rectitude.

'He had a friend in Assumpcion of the name of Domingo Rodriguez. This man had cast a covetous eye upon a Naboth's vineyard, and this Naboth, of whom Francia was the open enemy, was called Estanislao Machain. Never doubting that the young Doctor, like other lawyers, would undertake his unrighteous cause, Rodriguez opened to him his case, and requested, with a handsome retainer, his advocacy of it. Francia saw at once that his friend's pretensions were founded in fraud and injustice; and he not only refused to act as his counsel, but plainly told him that much as he hated his antagonist Machain, yet if he (Rodriguez) persisted in his iniquitous suit, that antagonist should have his (Francia's) most zealous support. But covetousness, as Ahab's story shows us, is not so easily driven from its pretensions; and in spite of Francia's warning, Rodriguez persisted. As he was a potent

[1] Robertson.

man in point of fortune, all was going against Machain and his devoted vineyard.

'At this stage of the question, Francia wrapped himself one night in his cloak, and walked to the house of his inveterate enemy, Machain. The slave who opened the door, knowing that his master and the Doctor, like the houses of Montagu and Capulet, were smoke in each other's eyes, refused the lawyer admittance, and ran to inform his master of the strange and unexpected visit. Machain, no less struck by the circumstance than his slave, for some time hesitated; but at length determined to admit Francia. In walked the silent Doctor to Machain's chamber. All the papers connected with the law-plea—voluminous enough I have been assured—were outspread upon the defendant's escritoire.

'"Machain," said the Lawyer, addressing him, "you know I am your enemy. But I know that my friend Rodriguez meditates, and will certainly, unless I interfere, carry against you an act of gross and lawless aggression; I have come to offer my services in your defence."

'The astonished Machain could scarcely credit his senses; but poured forth the ebullition of his gratitude in terms of thankful acquiescence.

'The first "escrito," or writing, sent-in by Francia to the Juez de Alzada, or Judge of the Court of Appeal, confounded the adverse advocates, and staggered the judge, who was in their interest. "My friend," said the judge to the leading counsel, "I cannot go forward in this matter, unless you bribe Dr. Francia to be silent." "I will try," replied the advocate; and he went to Naboth's counsel with a hundred doubloons (about three-hundred-and-fifty guineas), which he offered him as a bribe to let the cause take its iniquitous course. Considering too, that his best introduction would be a hint that this douceur was offered with the judge's concurrence, the knavish lawyer hinted to the upright one that such was the fact.

'"*Salga Usted*," said Francia, "*con sus viles pensamientos y vilisimo oro de mi casa!* Out, with your vile insinuations, and dross of gold, from my house!"

'Off marched the venal drudge of the unjust judge; and in a moment putting on his capote, the offended Advocate went to the residence of the Juez de Alzada. Shortly relating what had passed between himself and the myrmidon,—"Sir," continued Francia, "you are a disgrace to law, and a blot upon justice. You are, moreover, completely in my power; and

unless to-morrow I have a decision in favour of my client, I will make your seat upon the bench too hot for you, and the insignia of your judicial office shall become the emblems of your shame."

'The morrow *did* bring a decision in favour of Francia's client. Naboth retained his vineyard; the judge lost his reputation; and the young Doctor's fame extended far and wide.'

On the other hand, it is admitted that he quarrelled with his Father, in those days; and, as is reported, never spoke to him more. The subject of the quarrel is vaguely supposed to have been 'money matters.' Francia is not accused of avarice; nay is expressly acquitted of loving money, even by Rengger. But he did hate injustice;—and probably was not indisposed to allow *himself*, among others, 'the height of fair play!' A rigorous, correct man, that will have a spade be a spade; a man of much learning in Creole Law, and occult French Sciences, of great talent, energy, fidelity:—a man of some temper withal; unhappily subject to private 'hypochondria;' black private thunder-clouds, whence probably the origin of these *lightnings*, when you poke into him! He leads a lonesome self-secluded life; 'interrogating Nature' through mere star-glasses, and Abbé-Raynal philosophies,—who in that way will yield no very exuberant response. Mere law-papers, advocate-fees, civic officialities, renowns, and the wonder of Assumpcion Guachos;—not so much as a pair of Andalusian eyes that can *lasso* him, except in a temporary way: this man seems to have got but a lean lease of Nature, and may end in a rather shrunk condition! A century ago, with this atrabiliar earnestness of his, and such a reverberatory furnace of passions, inquiries, unspeakabilities burning in him, deep under cover, he might have made an excellent Monk of St. Dominic, fit almost for canonisation; nay, an excellent Superior of the Jesuits, Grand Inquisitor, or the like, had you developed him in that way. But, for all this, he is now a day too late. Monks of St. Dominic that might have been, do now, instead of devotional raptures and miraculous suspensions in prayer, produce—brown accidental female infants, to sell

flowers, in an indigent state, on the streets of Assumpcion! It is grown really a most barren time; and this Francia with his grim unspeakabilities, with his fiery splenetic humours, kept close under lock-and-key, what has he to look for in it? A post on the Bench, in the municipal *Cabildo*,—nay he has already a post in the Cabildo; he has already been Alcalde, Lord-Mayor of Assumpcion, and ridden in such gilt-coach as they had. He can look for little, one would say, but barren moneys, barren Guacho world-celebrities; Abbé-Raynal philosophisms also very barren; wholly a barren life-voyage of it, ending—in *zero*, thinks the Abbé-Raynal?

But no; the world wags not that way in those days. Far over the waters there have been Federations of the Champ-de-Mars: guillotines, portable-guillotines, and a French People risen against Tyrants; there has been a *Sansculottism*, speaking at last in cannon-volleys and the crash of towns and nations over half the world. Sleek Fatpauncho Usandwonto, sleek aristocratic Donothingism, sunk as in death-sleep in its well-stuffed easy-chair, or staggering in somnambulism on the housetops, seemed to itself to hear a voice say, Sleep no more, Donothingism; Donothingism doth murder sleep! It was indeed a terrible explosion, that of Sansculottism; commingling very Tartarus with the old-established stars;—fit, such a tumult was it, to awaken all but the dead.' And out of it there had come Napoleonisms, Tamerlanisms; and then as a branch of these, 'Conventions of Aranjuez,' soon followed by 'Spanish Juntas,' 'Spanish Cortes;' and, on the whole, a smiting broad awake of poor old Spain itself, much to its amazement. And naturally of New Spain next,—to *its* double amazement, seeing itself awake! And so, in the new Hemisphere too, arise wild projects, angry arguings; arise armed gatherings in Santa Marguerita Island, with Bolivars and invasions of Cumana; revolts of La Plata, revolts of this and then of that; the subterranean electric element, shock on shock, shaking and exploding, in the new Hemisphere too, from sea to sea. Very astonishing to witness, from the year 1810 and onwards. Had Rodriguez Francia three ears, he would hear; as many eyes as Argus, he would gaze! He is all eye, he is all ear. A new,

entirely different figure of existence is cut-out for Doctor Rodriguez.

The Paraguay People as a body, lying far inland, with little speculation in their heads, were in no haste to adopt the new republican gospel; but looked first how it would succeed in shaping itself into facts. Buenos-Ayres, Tucuman, most of the La Plata Provinces had made their revolutions, brought in the reign of liberty, and unluckily driven out the reign of law and regularity; before the Paraguenos could resolve on such an enterprise. Perhaps they are afraid? General Belgrano, with a force of a thousand men, missioned by Buenos-Ayres, came up the river to countenance them, in the end of 1810; but was met on their frontier in array of war; was attacked, or at least was terrified, in the night-watches, so that his men all fled;—and on the morrow, poor General Belgrano found himself not a countenancer, but one needing countenance; and was in a polite way sent down the river again![1] Not till a year after did the Paraguenos, by spontaneous movement, resolve on a career of freedom;—resolve on getting some kind of Congress assembled, and the old Government sent its ways. Francia, it is presumable, was active at once in exciting and restraining them: the fruit was now drop-ripe, we may say, and fell by a shake. Our old royal Governor went aside, worthy man, with some slight grimace, when ordered to do so; National Congress introduced itself; secretaries read papers, 'compiled chiefly out of Rollin's *Ancient History;*' and we became a Republic: with Don Fulgencio Yegros, one of the richest Guachos and best horseman of the province, for *President*, and two Assessors with him, called also *Vocales*, or Vowels, whose names escape us; Francia, as *Secretary*, being naturally the Consonant, or motive soul of the combination. This, as we grope out the date, was in 1811. The Paraguay Congress, having completed this constitution, went home again to its field-labours, hoping a good issue.

Feebler light hardly ever dawned for the historical mind, than this which is shed for us by Rengger, Robertsons and

[1] Rengger.

Company, on the birth, the cradling, baptismal processes and early fortunes of the new Paraguay Republic. Through long vague, and indeed intrinsically vacant pages of their Books, it lies gray, undecipherable, without form and void. Francia was Secretary, and a Republic did take place: this, as one small clear-burning fact, shedding far a comfortable visibility, conceivability, over the universal darkness, and making it into conceivable dusk with one rushlight fact in the centre of it,—this we do know; and, cheerfully yielding to necessity, decide that this shall suffice us to know. What more is there? Absurd somnolent persons, struck broad awake by the subterranean concussion of Civil and Religious Liberty all over the World, meeting together to establish a republican career of freedom, and compile official papers out of Rollin,—are not a subject on which the historical mind *can* be enlightened. The historical mind, thank Heaven, forgets such persons and their papers, as fast as you repeat them. Besides, these Guacho populations are greedy, superstitious, vain; and, as Miers said in his haste, mendacious every soul of them! Within the confines of Paraguay, we know for certain but of one man who would do himself an injury to do a just or true thing under the sun: one man who understands in his heart that this Universe is an eternal Fact,—and not some huge temporary Pumpkin, saccharine, absinthian; the rest of its significance chimerical merely! Such men cannot have a history, though a Thucydides came to write it.—Enough for us to understand that Don This was a vapouring blockhead, who followed his pleasures, his peculations, and Don That another of the same; that there occurred fatuities, mismanagements innumerable; then discontents, open grumblings, and, as a running accompaniment, intriguings, caballings, outings, innings: till the Government House, fouler than when the Jesuits had it, became a bottomless pestilent inanity, insupportable to any articulate-speaking soul; till Secretary Francia should feel that he, for one could not be Consonant to such a set of Vowels; till Secretary Francia, one day, flinging down his papers, rising to his feet, should jerk-out with oratorical vivacity his lean right-hand, and say, with knit brows,

in a low swift tone: "Adieu, Senhores; God preserve you many years!"—

Francia withdrew to his *chacra*, a pleasant country-house in the woods of Ytapúa not far off; there to interrogate Nature, and live in a private manner. Parish Robertson, much about this date, which we grope and guess to have been perhaps in 1812, was boarded with a certain ancient Donna Juana, in that same region; had *tertulias* of unimaginable brilliancy; and often went shooting of an evening. On one of these—But he shall himself report:

'On one of those lovely evenings in Paraguay, after the southwest wind has both cleared and cooled the air, I was drawn, in my pursuit of game, into a peaceful valley, not far from Donna Juana's, and remarkable for its combination of all the striking features of the scenery of the country. Suddenly I came upon a neat and unpretending cottage. Up rose a partridge; I fired, and the bird came to the ground. A voice from behind called out, "*Buen tiro*"—"a good shot." I turned round, and beheld a gentleman of about fifty years of age, dressed in a suit of black, with a large scarlet *capote*, or cloak, thrown over his shoulders. He had a *maté*-cup in one hand, a cigar in the other; and a little urchin of a negro, with his arms crossed, was in attendance by the gentleman's side. The stranger's countenance was dark, and his black eyes were very penetrating, while his jet hair, combed back from a bold forehead, and hanging in natural ringlets over his shoulders, gave him a dignified and striking air. He wore on his shoes large golden buckles, and at the knees of his breeches the same.

'In exercise of the primitive and simple hospitality common in the country, I was invited to sit down under the corridor, and to take a cigar and *maté* (cup of Paraguay tea). A celestial globe, a large telescope and a theodolite were under the little portico; and I immediately inferred that the personage before me was no other than Dr. Francia.'

Yes, here for the first time in authentic history, a remarkable hearsay becomes a remarkable visuality: through a pair of clear human eyes, you look face to face on the very figure of the man. Is not this verily the exact record of those clear Robertsonian eyes, and seven senses; entered accurately, then

and not afterwards, on the ledger of the memory? We will hope so; who can but hope so! The figure of the man will, at all events, be exact. Here too is the figure of his library; —the conversation, if any, was of the last degree of insignificance, and may be left out, or supplied *ad libitum:*

'He introduced me to his library, in a confined room, with a very small window, and that so shaded by the roof of the corridor, as to admit the least portion of light necessary for study. The library was arranged on three rows of shelves, extending across the room, and might have consisted of three-hundred volumes. There were many ponderous books on law; a few on the inductive sciences; some in French and some in Latin upon subjects of general literature, with Euclid's Elements, and some schoolboy treatises on algebra. On a large table were heaps of law-papers and processes. Several folios bound in vellum were outspread upon it; a lighted candle (though placed there solely with a view to light cigars) lent its feeble aid to illumine the room; while a maté-cup and inkstand, both of silver, stood on another part of the table. There was neither carpet nor mat on the brick floor; and the chairs were of such ancient fashion, size and weight, that it required a considerable effort to move them from one spot to another.'

Peculation, malversation, the various forms of imbecility and voracious dishonesty went their due course in the Government-offices of Assumpcion, unrestrained by Francia, and unrestrainable:—till, as we may say, it reached a height; and, like other suppurations and diseased concretions in the living system, had to burst, and take itself away. To the eyes of Paraguay in general, it had become clear that such a reign of liberty was unendurable; that some new revolution, or change of ministry was indispensable.

Rengger says that Francia withdrew 'more than once to his *chacra*, disgusted with his Colleagues; who always, by unlimited promises and protestations, had to flatter him back again; and then anew disgusted him. Francia is the Consonant of these absurd 'Vowels;' no business can go on without Francia! And the finances are deranged, insolvent; and the military, unpaid, ineffective, cannot so much as keep out

the Indians; and there comes trouble, and rumour of new war, from Buenos-Ayres;—alas, from what corner of the great Continent, come there other than troubles and rumours of war? Patriot generals become traitor generals; get themselves 'shot in market-places;' revolution follows revolution. Artigas, close on our borders, has begun harrying the Banda Oriental with fire and sword; 'dictating despatches from cow-skulls.' Like clouds of wolves,—only feller, being mounted on horseback, with pikes,—the Indians dart-in on us; carrying conflagration and dismay. Paraguay must get itself governed, or it will be worse for Paraguay! The eyes of all Paraguay, we can well fancy, turn to the one man of talent they have, the one man of veracity they have.

In 1813 a second Congress is got together: we fancy it was Francia's last advice to the Government suppuration, when it flattered him back, for the last time, to ask his advice, That such suppuration do now dissolve itself, and a new Congress be summoned! In the new Congress, the *Vocales* are voted out; Francia and Fulgenico are named joint *Consuls:* with Francia for Consul, and Don Fulgencio Yegros for Consul's *cloak*, it may be better. Don Fulgencio rides about in gorgeous sash and epaulettes, a rich man and horse-subduer; good as Consul's cloak;—but why should the real Consul have a *cloak?* Next year in the third Congress, Francia, 'by insidious manœuvring,' by 'favour of the military,' and, indeed, also in some sort, we may say, by law of Nature,—gets himself declared *Dictator:* 'for three years,' or for life, may in these circumstances mean much the same. This was in 1814. Francia never assembled any Congress more; having stolen the constitutional palladiums, and insidiously got his wicked will! Of a Congress that compiled constitutions out of *Rollin*, who would not lament such destiny? This Congress should have met again! It was indeed, say Rengger and the Robertsons themselves, such a Congress as never met before in the world; a Congress which knew not its right hand from its left; which drank infinite rum in the taverns; and had one wish, that of getting on horseback again, home to its field-husbandry and partridge-shooting again. The military mostly

favoured Francia; being gained-over by him,—the thief of constitutional palladiums.

With Francia's entrance on the Government as Consul, still more as Dictator, a great improvement, it is granted even by Rengger, did in all quarters forthwith show itself. The finances were husbanded, were accurately gathered; every official person in Paraguay had to bethink him, and begin doing his work, instead of merely seeming to do it. The soldiers Francia took care to see paid and drilled; to see march, with real death-shot and service, when the Indians or other enemies showed themselves. *Guardias*, Guard-houses, at short distances, were established along the River's bank and all round the dangerous Frontiers: wherever the Indian centaur-troop showed face, an alarm-cannon went off, and soldiers, quickly assembling, with actual death-shot and service, were upon them. These wolf-hordes had to vanish into the heart of their deserts again. The land had peace. Neither Artigas, nor any of the firebrands and war-plagues which were distracting South America from side to side, could get across the border. All negotiation or intercommuning with Buenos-Ayres, or with any of these war-distracted countries, was peremptorily waived. To no 'Congress of Lima,' 'General Congress of Panama,' or other general or particular Congress, would Francia, by deputy or message, offer the smallest recognition. All South America raging and ravening like one huge dog-kennel gone rabid, we here in Paraguay have peace, and cultivate our tea-trees; why should not we let well alone? By degrees, one thing acting on another, and this ring of Frontier 'Guard-houses,' being already erected there, a rigorous *sanitary line*, impregnable as brass, was drawn round all Paraguay; no communication, import or export trade allowed, except by the Dictator's license,—given on payment of the due moneys, when the political horizon seemed innocuous; refused when otherwise. The Dictator's trade-licenses were a considerable branch of his revenues; his entrance-dues, somewhat onerous to the foreign merchant (think the Messrs. Robertson), were another. Paraguay stood isolated; the

rabid dog-kennel raging round it, wide as South America, but kept out as by lock-and-key.

These were vigorous measures, gradually coming on the somnolent Guacho population! It seems, meanwhile, that, even after the Perpetual Dictatorship, and onwards to the fifth or the sixth year of Francia's government, there was, though the constitutional palladiums were stolen, nothing very special to complain of. Paraguay had peace; sat under its tea-tree; the rabid dog-kennel, Indians, Artiguenos and other war firebrands, all shut-out from it. But in that year 1819, the second year of the Perpetual Dictatorship, there arose, not for the first time, dim indications of 'Plots,' even dangerous Plots! In that year the firebrand Artigas was finally quenched; obliged to beg a lodging even of Francia, his enemy;—and got it, hospitably, though contemptuously. And now straightway there advanced, from Artigas's lost wasted country, a certain General Ramirez, his rival and conqueror, and fellow-bandit and firebrand. This General Ramirez advanced up to our very frontier; first with offers of alliance; failing that, with offers of war; on which latter offer he was closed with, was cut to pieces; and—a Letter was found about him, addressed to Don Fulgencio Yegros, the rich Guacho horseman and Ex-Consul; which arrested all the faculties of Dr. Francia's most intense intelligence, there and then! A Conspiracy, with Don Fulgencio at the head of it; Conspiracy which seems the wider-spread the farther one investigates it; which has been brewing itself these 'two years,' and now 'on Good-Friday next' is to be burst out; starting with the massacre of Dr. Francia and others, whatever it may close with![1]

Francia was not a man to be trifled with in Plots! He looked, watched, investigated, till he got the exact extent, position, nature and structure of this Plot fully in his eye; and then—why, then he pounced on it like a glede-falcon, like a fierce condor, suddenly from the invisible blue; struck beak and claws into the very heart of it, tore it into small fragments, and consumed it on the spot. It is Francia's way! This was

[1] Rengger.

the last plot, though not the first plot, Francia ever heard of during his Perpetual Dictatorship.

It is, as we find, over these three or these two years, while the Fulgencio Plot is getting itself pounced upon and torn in pieces, that the 'reign of terror,' properly so called, extends. Over these three or these two years only,—though the 'running shriek' of it confuses all things to the end of the chapter. It was in this stern period that Francia executed above forty persons. Not entirely inexplicable! "*Por Dios*, ye shall not conspire against me; I will not allow it! The Career of Freedom, be it known to all men and Guachos, is not yet begun in this country; I am still only casting out the Seven Devils. My lease of Paraguay, a harder one than your stupidities suppose, is for life: the contract is, Thou must die if thy lease be taken from thee. Aim not at my life, ye constitutional Guachos,—or let it be a diviner man than Don Fulgencio the Horse-subduer that does it. By Heaven, if you aim at my life, I will bid you have a care of your own!" He executed upwards of forty persons. How many he arrested, flogged, cross-questioned—for he is an inexorable man! If you are guilty, or suspected of guilt, it will go ill with you here. Francia's arrest, carried by a grenadier, arrives; you are in strait prison; you are in Francia's bodily presence; those sharp St.-Dominic eyes, that diabolic intellect, prying into you, probing, cross-questioning you, till the secret cannot be hid: till the 'three ball-cartridges' are handed to a sentry;—and your doom is Rhadamanthine!

But the Plots, as we say, having ceased by this rough surgery, it would appear that there was, for the next twenty years, little or no more of it, little or no use for more. The 'reign of terror,' one begins to find, was properly a reign of rigour; which would become 'terrible' enough if you infringed the rules of it, but which was peaceable otherwise, regular otherwise. Let this, amid the 'running shriek,' which will and should run its full length in such circumstances, be well kept in mind.

It happened too, as Rengger tells us, in the same year (1820, as we grope and gather), that a visitation of locusts, as

sometimes occurs, destroyed all the crops of Paraguay; and there was no prospect but of universal dearth or famine. The crops are done; eaten by locusts; the summer at an end! We have no foreign trade, or next to none, and never had almost any; what will become of Paraguay and its Guachos? In Guachos is no hope, no help: but in a Dionysius of the Guachos? Dictator Francia, led by occult French Sciences and natural sagacity, nay driven by necessity itself, peremptorily commands the farmers, throughout all Paraguay, To sow a certain portion of their lands anew; with or without hope,—under penalties! The result was a moderately good harvest still: the result was a discovery that Two harvests were, every year, possible in Paraguay; that Agriculture, a rigorous Dictator presiding over it, could be infinitely improved there.[1] As Paraguay has about 100,000 square miles of territory mostly fertile, and only some two souls planted on each square mile thereof, it seemed to the Dictator that this, and not Foreign Trade, might be a good course for his Paraguenos. This accordingly, and not foreign trade, in the present state of the political horizon, was the course resolved on; the course persisted in, 'with evident advantages,' says Rengger. Thus, one thing acting on another,—domestic Plot, hanging on Artigas's country from without; and Locust swarms with Improvement of Husbandry in the interior; and those Guard-houses all already there, along the frontier,—Paraguay came more and more to be hermetically closed; and Francia reigned over it, for the rest of his life, as a rigorous Dionysius of Paraguay, without foreign intercourse, or with such only as seemed good to Francia.

How the Dictator, now secure in possession, did manage this huge Paraguay, which, by strange 'insidious' and other means, had fallen in life-lease to him, and was his to do the best he could with, it were interesting to know. What the meaning of him, the result of him, actually was? One desiderates some Biography of Francia by a native!—Meanwhile, in the *Æsthetische Briefwechsel* of Herr Professor Sauerteig, a

[1] Rengger, pp. 67, &c.

Work not yet known in England, nor treating specially of this subject, we find, scattered at distant intervals, a remark or two which may be worth translating. Professor Sauerteig, an open soul, looking with clear eye and large recognising heart over all accessible quarters of the world, has cast a sharp sun-glance here and there into Dr. Francia too. These few philosophical Remarks of his, and then a few Anecdotes gleaned elsewhere, such as the barren ground yields, must comprise what more we have to say of Francia.

'Pity,' exclaims Sauerteig once, 'that a nation cannot reform itself, as the English are now trying to do, by what their newspapers call "tremendous cheers!" Alas, it cannot be done. Reform is not joyous but grievous; no single man can reform himself without stern suffering and stern working; how much less can a nation of men. The serpent sheds not his old skin without rusty disconsolateness; he is not happy, but miserable! In the *Water-cure* itself, do you not sit steeped for months; washed to the heart in elemental drenchings; and, like Job, are made to curse your day? Reforming of a nation is a terrible business! Thus too, Medea, when she made men young again, was wont (*du Himmel!*) to hew them in pieces with meat-axes; cast them into caldrons, and boil them for a length of time. How much handier could they but have done it by "tremendous cheers" alone!'——

'Like a drop of surgical antiseptic liquid, poured (by the benign Powers, as I fancy!) into boundless brutal corruptions; very sharp, very caustic, corrosive enough, this tawny tyrannous Dr. Francia, in the interior of the South-American Continent,—he too is one of the elements of the grand Phenomenon there. A monstrous moulting-process taking place; monstrous gluttonous *boa-constrictor* (he is of length from Panama to Patagonia) shedding his old skin; whole continent getting itself chopped to pieces, and boiled in the Medea caldron, to become young again,—unable to manage it by "tremendous cheers" alone!'——

'What they say about "love of power" amounts to little. Power? Love of "power" merely to make flunkeys come and go for you is a "love," I should think, which enters only into the minds of persons in a very infantine state! A grown man, like this Dr. Francia, who wants nothing, as I am assured, but

three cigars daily, a cup of *maté*, and four ounces of butchers' meat with brown bread: the whole world and its united flunkeys, taking constant thought of the matter, can do nothing for him but that only. That he already has, and has had always; why should he, not being a minor, love flunkey "power?" He loves to see *you* about him, with your flunkey promptitudes, with your grimaces, adulations and sham-loyalty? You are so beautiful, a daily and hourly feast to the eye and soul? Ye unfortunates, from his heart rises one prayer, That the last created flunkey had vanished from this universe, never to appear more!

'And yet truly a man does tend, and must under frightful penalties perpetually tend, to be king of his world; to stand in his world as what he is, a centre of light and order, not of darkness and confusion. A man loves power: yes, if he see disorder his eternal enemy rampant about him, he does love to see said enemy in the way of being conquered; he can have no rest till that come to pass! Your Mahomet cannot bear a rent cloak, but clouts it with his own hands; how much more a rent country, a rent world? He has to imprint the image of his own veracity upon the world, and shall, and must, and will do it, more or less: it is at his peril if he neglect any great or any small possibility he may have of this. Francia's inner flame is but a meagre, blue-burning one: let him irradiate midnight Paraguay with it, such as it is.'——

'Nay, on the whole, how cunning is Nature in getting *her* farms leased! Is it not a blessing this Paraguay can get the one veracious man it has, to take lease of it, in these sad circumstances? His farm-profits, and whole wages, it would seem, amount only to what is called "Nothing, and find yourself!" Spartan food and lodging, solitude, two cigars, and a cup of *maté* daily, he already had.'

Truly, it would seem, as Sauerteig remarks, Dictator Francia had not a very joyous existence of it, in this his life-lease of Paraguay! Casting-out of the Seven Devils from a Guacho population is not joyous at all; both exorcist and exorcised find it sorrowful! Meanwhile, it does appear, there was some improvement made: no veritable labour, not even a Dr. Francia's, is in vain.

Of Francia's improvements there might as much be said as

of his cruelties or rigours; for indeed, at bottom, the one was in proportion to the other. He improved agriculture:—not two ears of corn where one only grew, but two harvests of corn, as we have seen! He introduced schools, 'boarding-schools,' 'elementary schools,' and others, on which Rengger has a chapter; everywhere he promoted education, as he could; repressed superstition as he could. Strict justice between man and man was enforced in his Law-courts; he himself would accept no gift, not even a trifle, in any case whatever. Rengger, on packing-up for departure, had left in his hands, not from forgetfulness, a Print of Napoleon; worth some shillings in Europe, but invaluable in Paraguay, where Francia, who admired this Hero much, had hitherto seen no likeness of him but a Nürnberg caricature. Francia sent an express after Rengger, to ask what the value of the Print was. No value; M. Rengger could not sell Prints; it was much at his Excellency's service. His Excellency straightway returned it. An exact, decisive man! Peculation, idleness, ineffectuality, had to cease in all the Public Offices of Paraguay. So far as lay in Francia, no public and no private man in Paraguay was allowed to slur his work; all public and all private men, so far as lay in Francia, were forced to do their work or die! We might define him as the born enemy of quacks; one who has from Nature a heart-hatred of *un*veracity in man or in thing, wheresoever he sees it. Of persons who do not speak the truth, and do not act the truth, he has a kind of diabolic-divine impatience; they had better disappear out of his neighbourhood. Poor Francia: his light was but a very sulphurous, meagre, blue-burning one; but he irradiated Paraguay with it (as our Professor says) the best he could.

That he had to maintain himself *alive* all the while, and would suffer no man to glance contradiction at him, but instantaneously repressed all such: this too we need no ghost to tell us; this lay in the very nature of the case. His lease of Paraguay was a *life*-lease. He had his 'three ball-cartridges' ready for whatever man he found aiming at *his* life. He had frightful prisons. He had *Tevego* far up among the wastes, a kind of Paraguay Siberia, to which unruly persons,

not yet got the length of shooting, were relegated. The main exiles, Rengger says, were drunken mulattoes and the class called unfortunate-females. They lived miserably there; became a sadder, and perhaps a wiser, body of mulattoes and unfortunate-females.

But let us listen for a moment to the Reverend Manuel Perez as he preaches, 'in the Church of the Incarnation at Assumpcion, on the 20th of October 1840,' in a tone somewhat nasal, yet trustworthy withal. His 'Funeral Discourse,' translated into a kind of English, presents itself still audible in the *Argentine News* of Buenos-Ayres, No. 813. We select some passages; studying to abate the nasal tone a little; to reduce, if possible, the Argentine English under the law of grammar. It is the worst translation in the world, and does poor Manuel Perez one knows not what injustice. This Funeral Discourse has 'much surprised' the Able Editor, it seems; —has led him perhaps to ask, or be readier for asking, Whether all that confused loud litanying about 'reign of terror,' and so forth, was not possibly of a rather long-eared nature?

'Amid the convulsions of revolution,' says the Reverend Manuel, the Lord, looking down with pity on Paraguay, raised up Don José Gaspar Francia for its deliverance. *And when*, in the words of my Text, *the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them.*'

'What measures did not his Excellency devise, what labours undergo, to preserve peace in the Republic at home, and place it in an attitude to command respect from abroad! His first care was directed to obtain supplies of Arms, and to discipline Soldiers. To all that would import arms he held out the inducement of exemption from duty, and the permission to export in return whatever produce they preferred. An abundant supply of excellent arms was, by these means, obtained. I am lost in wonder to think how this great man could attend to such a multiplicity of things! He applied himself to the study of the military art; and, in a short time, taught the exercise, and directed military evolutions like the skilfullest veteran. Often have I seen his Excellency go up to a recruit,

and show him by example how to take aim at the target. Could any Paragueno think it other than honourable to carry a musket, when his Dictator taught him how to manage it? The cavalry-exercise too, though it seems to require a man at once robust and experienced in horsemanship, his Excellency as you know, did himself superintend; at the head of his squadrons he charged and manœuvred, as if bred to it; and directed them with an energy and vigour which infused his own martial spirit into these troops.'

'What evils do not the people suffer from Highwaymen!' exclaims his Reverence, a little farther on; 'violence, plunder, murder, are crimes familiar to these malefactors. The inaccessible mountains and wide deserts in this Republic seemed to offer impunity to such men. Our Dictator succeeded in striking such a terror into them that they entirely disappeared, seeking safety in a change of life. His Excellency saw that the manner of inflicting the punishment was more efficacious than even the punishment itself; and on this principle he acted. Whenever a robber could be seized, he was led to the nearest Guard-house (*Guardia*); a summary trial took place; and straightway, so soon as he had made confession, he was shot. These means proved effectual. Erelong the Republic was in such security, that, we may say, a child might have travelled from the Uruguay to the Parana without other protection than the dread which the Supreme Dictator had inspired.'—This is saying something, your Reverence!

'But what is all this compared to the demon of Anarchy? Oh! exclaims his simple Reverence, 'Oh, my friends, would I had the talent to paint to you the miseries of a people that fall into anarchy! And was not our Republic on the very eve of this? Yes, brethren.—'It behoved his Excellency to be prompt; to smother the enemy in his cradle! He did so. He seized the leaders; brought to summary trial, they were convicted of high treason against the country. What a struggle now, for his Excellency, between the law of duty, and the voice of feeling'—if feeling to any extent there were! 'I,' exclaims his Reverence, 'am confident that had the doom of imprisonment on those persons seemed sufficient for the State's peace, his Excellency never would have ordered their execution.' It was unavoidable; nor was it avoided; it was done! 'Brethren, should not I hesitate, lest it be a profanation of the sacred place I now occupy, if I seem to approve sanguinary measures in opposition to the mildness of the Gospel? Brethren, no. God himself approved the conduct of Solo-

mon in putting Joab and Adonijah to death.' Life is sacred, thinks his Reverence; but there is something more sacred still: woe to him who does not know that withal!

Alas, your Reverence, Paraguay has not yet succeeded in abolishing capital punishment, then? But indeed neither has Nature, anywhere that I hear of, yet succeeded in abolishing it. Act with the due degree of perversity, you are sure enough of being violently put to death, in hospital or highway,—by dyspepia, delirium tremens, or stuck through by the kindled rage of your fellow-men! What can the friend of humanity do?—Twaddle in Exeter-hall or elsewhere, 'till he become a bore to us,' and perhaps worse! An Advocate in Arras once gave-up a good judicial appointment, and retired into frugality and privacy, rather than doom one culprit to die by law. The name of this Advocate, let us mark it well, was Maximilien Robespierre. There are sweet kinds of twaddle that have a deadly virulence of poison concealed in them; like the sweetness of sugar-of-lead. Were it not better to make *just* laws, think you, and then execute them strictly,—as the gods still do?

'His Excellency next directed his attention to purging the State from another class of enemies,' says Perez in the Incarnation Church; 'the peculating Tax-gatherers, namely. Vigilantly detecting their frauds, he made them refund for what was past, and took precautions against the like in future; all their accounts were to be handed-in, for his examination, once every year.'

'The habit of his Excellency when he delivered-out articles for the supply of the public; that prolix and minute counting of things apparently unworthy of his attention,—had its origin in the same motive. I believe that he did so, less from a want of confidence in the individuals lately appointed for this purpose, than from a desire to show them with what delicacy they should proceed. Hence likewise his ways, in scrupulously examining every piece of artisans' workmanship.'

'Republic of Paraguay, how art thou indebted to the toils, the vigils and cares of our Perpetual Dictator! It seemed as if this extraordinary man were endowed with ubiquity, to attend to all thy wants and exigencies. Whilst in his closet, he

was traversing thy frontiers to place thee in an attitude of security. What devastation did not those inroads of Indians from the Chaco occasion to the inhabitants of Rio-Abajo! Ever and anon there reached Assumpcion, tidings of the terror and affliction caused by their incursions. Which of us hoped that evils so wide-spread, ravages so appalling, could be counteracted? Our Dictator, nevertheless, did devise effectual ways of securing that part of the Republic.

'Four respectable Fortresses with competent garrisons have been the impregnable barrier which has restrained the irruptions of those ferocious Savages. Inhabitants of Rio-Abajo! rest tranquil in your homes; you are a portion of the People whom the Lord confided to the care of our Dictator; you are safe.'

'The precautions and wise measures he adopted to repel force, and drive-back the Savages to the north of the Republic; the Fortresses of Climpo, of San Carlos de Apa, placed on the best footing for defence; the orders and instructions furnished to the Villa de la Concepcion,—secured that quarter of the Republic against attack from any.

'The great Wall, ditch and fortress, on the opposite bank of the River Parana; the force and judicious arrangement of the troops distributed over the interior in the south of our Republic, have commanded the respect of its enemies in that quarter.'

'The beauty, the symmetry and good taste displayed in the building of cities convey an advantageous idea of their inhabitants,' continues Perez: 'Thus thought Caractacus, King of the Angles,—thus think most persons!' 'His Excellency, glancing at the condition of the Capital of the Republic, saw a city in disorder and without police; streets without regularity, houses built according to the caprice of their owners.'

But enough, O Perez; for it becomes too nasal! Perez with a confident face, asks in fine, Whether all these things do not clearly prove to men and Guachos of sense, that Dictator Francia *was* 'the deliverer whom the Lord raised up to deliver Paraguay from its enemies?'—Truly, O Perez, the benefits of him seem to have been considerable. Undoubtedly a man 'sent by Heaven,'—as all of us are! Nay, it may be, the benefit of him is not even yet exhausted, even yet entirely become visible. Who knows but, in unborn centuries,

Paragueno men will look back to their lean iron Francia, as men do in such cases to the one veracious person, and institute considerations! Oliver Cromwell, dead two-hundred years, does yet speak; nay, perhaps now first begins to speak. The meaning and meanings of the one true man, never so lean and limited, starting-up direct from Nature's heart, in this bewildered Guacho world, gone far away from Nature, are endless!

The Messrs. Robertson are very merry on this attempt of Francia's to rebuild on a better plan the City of Assumpcion. The City of Assumpcion, full of tropical vegetation and 'permanent hedges, the deposits of nuisance and vermin,'[1] has no pavement, no straightness of streets; the sandy thoroughfare in some quarters is torn by the rain into gullies, impassable with convenience to any animal but a kangaroo. Francia, after meditation, decides on having it remodelled, paved, straightened,—irradiated with the image of the one regular man. Robertson laughs to see a Dictator, sovereign ruler, straddling about, 'taking observations with his theodolite,' and so forth: O Robertson, if there was no other man that *could* observe with a theodolite? Nay, it seems further, the improvement of Assumpcion was attended, once more, with the dreadfullest tyrannies: peaceable citizens dreaming no harm, no active harm to any soul, but mere peaceable passive dirt and irregularity to all souls, were ordered to pull-down their houses which happened to stand in the middle of streets; forced (under rustle of the gallows) to draw their purses, and rebuild them elsewhere! It is horrible. Nay, they said, Francia's true aim in these improvements, in this cutting-down of the luxuriant 'cross hedges' and architectural monstrosities, was merely to save himself from being shot, from under cover, as he rode through the place. It may be so; but Assumpcion is now an improved paved City, much squarer in the corners (and with the planned capacity, it seems, of growing ever squarer[2]); passable with convenience not to kangaroos only, but to wooden bullock-carts and all vehicles and animals.

[1] Perez. [2] Ibid.

Indeed our Messrs. Robertson find something comic as well as tragic in Dictator Francia; and enliven their running shriek, all through this *Reign of Terror*, with a pleasant vein of conventional satire. One evening, for example, a Robertson being about to leave Paraguay for England, and having waited upon Francia to make the parting compliments, Francia, to the Robertson's extreme astonishment, orders-in a large bale of goods, orders them to be opened on the table there: Tobacco, poncho-cloth, and other produce of the country, all of first-rate quality, and with the prices ticketed. These goods this astonished Robertson is to carry to the 'Bar of the House of Commons,' and there to say, in such fashion and phraseology as a native may know to be suitable: "Mr. Speaker,—Dr. Francia is Dictator of Paraguay, a country of tropical fertility and 100,000 square miles in extent, producing these commodities, at these prices. With nearly all foreign nations he declines altogether to trade; but with the English, such is his notion of them, he is willing and desirous to trade. These are his commodities, in endless quantity; of this quality, at these prices. He wants arms, for his part. What say you, Mr. Speaker?"—Sure enough, our Robertson, arriving at the 'Bar of the House of Commons' with such a message, would have cut an original figure! Not to the 'House of Commons' was this message properly addressed; but to the English Nation; which Francia, idiot-like, supposed to be somehow represented, and made accessible and addressable in the House of Commons. It was a strange imbecility in any Dictator!—The Robertson, we find accordingly, did *not* take this bale of goods to the Bar of the House of Commons; nay, what was far worse, he did not, owing to accidents, go to England at all, or bring any arms back to Francia at all: hence, indeed, Francia's unreasonable detestation of him, hardly to be restrained within the bounds of common politeness! A man who said he would do, and then did not do, was at no time a kind of man admirable to Francia. Large sections of this *Reign of Terror* are a sort of unmusical sonata, or free duet with variations, to this text: "How unadmirable a hide-merchant that does not keep his

word!"—"How censurable, not to say ridiculous and imbecile, the want of common politeness in a Dictator!"

Francia was a man that liked performance: and sham-performance, in Paraguay as elsewhere, was a thing too universal. What a time of it had this strict man with *un*real performers, imaginary workmen, public and private, cleric and laic! Ye Guachos,—it is no child's-play, casting-out those Seven Devils from you!

Monastic or other entirely slumberous church-establishments could expect no great favour from Francia. Such of them as seemed incurable, entirely slumberous, he somewhat roughly shook awake, somewhat sternly ordered to begone. *Debout, canaille fainéante*, as his prophet Raynal says; *Debout: aux champs, aux ateliers!* Can I have you sit here, droning old metre through your nose; your heart asleep in mere gluttony, the while; and all Paraguay a wilderness or nearly so,—the Heaven's blessed sunshine growing mere tangles, lianas, yellow-fevers, rattlesnakes, and jaguars on it? Up, swift, to work;—or mark this governmental horsewhip, what the crack of it is, what the cut of it is like to be!—Incurable, for one class, seemed archbishops, bishops, and such like; given merely to a sham-warfare against extinct devils. At the crack of Francia's terrible whip they went, dreading what the cut of it might be. A cheap worship in Paraguay, according to the humour of the people, Francia left; on condition that it did no mischief. Wooden saints and the like ware, he also left sitting in their niches: no new ones, even on solicitation, would he give a doit to buy. Being petitioned to provide a new patron-saint for one of his new Fortifications once, he made this answer: "O People of Paraguay, how long will you continue idiots? While I was a Catholic, I thought as you do: but I now see there are no saints but good cannons that will guard our frontiers!"[1] This also is noteworthy. He inquired of the two Swiss Surgeons, what their religion was; and then added, "Be of what religion you like, here: Christians, Jews, Mussulmans,—but don't be Atheists."

Equal trouble had Francia with his laic workers, and indeed

[1] Rengger.

with all manner of workers ; for it is in Paraguay as elsewhere, like priest like people. Francia had extensive barrack-buildings, nay city-buildings (as we have seen), arm-furnishings ; immensities of work going on ; and his workmen had in general a tendency to be imaginary. He could get no work out of them ; only a more or less deceptive similitude of work! Masons so-called, builders of houses, did not build, but merely seem to build ; their walls would not bear weather, stand on their bases in high winds. Hodge-razors, in all conceivable kinds, were openly marketed, 'which were never meant to shave, but only to be sold!' For a length of time Francia's righteous soul struggled sore, yet unexplosively, with the propensities of these unfortunate men. By rebuke, by remonstrance, encouragement, offers of reward, and every vigilance and effort, he strove to convince them that it was unfortunate for a Son of Adam to be an imaginary workman ; that every Son of Adam had better make razors which *were* meant to shave. In vain, all in vain! At length, Francia lost patience with them. "Thou wretched Fraction, wilt thou be the ninth part even of a tailor? Does it beseem thee to weave cloth of devil's-dust instead of true wool ; and cut and sew it as if thou wert not a tailor, but the fraction of a very tailor! I cannot endure everything!" Francia, in despair, erected his 'Workman's Gallows.' Yes, that institution of the country did actually exist in Paraguay ; men and workmen saw it with eyes. A most remarkable, and, on the whole, not unbeneficial institution of society there. Robertson gives us the following scene with the Belt-maker of Assumpcion ; which, be it literal, or in part poetic, does, no doubt of it, hold the mirror up to Nature in an altogether true, and surely in a very surprising manner :

'In came, one afternoon, a poor Shoemaker, with a couple of grenadiers' belts, neither according to the fancy of the Dictator. "Sentinel,"—said he,—and in came the sentinel ; when the following conversation ensued :

'*Dictator.* "Take this *bribonazo*" (a very favourite word of the Dictator's, and which being interpreted, means "most impertinent scoundrel")—"take this *bribonazo* to the gibbet over

the way; walk him under it half-a-dozen times:—and now," said he, turning to the trembling shoemaker, "bring me such another pair of belts, and instead of *walking* under the gallows, we shall try how you can *swing* upon it."

'*Shoemaker.* "Please your Excellency, I have done my best."

'*Dictator.* "Well, *bribon*, if this *be* your best, I shall do *my* best to see that you never again mar a bit of the State's leather. The belts are of no use to me; but they will do very well to hang you upon the little framework which the grenadier will show you."

'*Shoemaker.* "God bless your Excellency, the Lord forbid! I am your vassal, your slave: day and night have I served, and will serve my lord; only give me two days more to prepare the belts; *y por el alma de un triste zapatéro* (by the soul of a poor shoemaker), I will make them to your Excellency's liking."

'*Dictator.* "Off with him, sentinel!"

'*Sentinel.* "*Venga, bribon,* Come along, you rascal."

'*Shoemaker.* "Señor Excelentisimo,—*this very night* I will make the belts according to your Excellency's pattern."

'*Dictator.* "Well, you shall have till the morning; but still you must pass under the gibbet: it is a salutary process, and may at once quicken the work and improve the workmanship."

'*Sentinel.* "*Vamonos, bribon;* the Supreme commands it."

'Off was the Shoemaker marched: he was, according to orders, passed and repassed under the gibbet; and then allowed to retire to his stall.'

He worked there with such an alacrity and sibylline enthusiasm, all night, that his belts on the morrow were without parallel in South America;—and he is now, if still in this life, Beltmaker-general to Paraguay, a prosperous man; grateful to Francia and the gallows, we may hope, for casting certain of the Seven Devils out of him!

Such an institution of society would evidently not be introducible, under that simple form, in our old-constituted European countries. Yet it may be asked of constitutional persons in these times, By what succedaneum they mean to supply the want of it, then? In a community of imaginary workmen, how can you pretend to have any government, or

social thing whatever, that were real? Certain Tenpound Franchisers, with their 'tremendous cheers,' are invited to reflect on this. With a community of quack workmen, it is by the law of Nature impossible that other than a quack government can be got to exist. Constitutional or other, with ballot-boxes or with none, your society in all its phases, administration, legislation, teaching, preaching, praying, and writing periodicals per sheet, will be a quack society; terrible to live in, disastrous to look upon. Such an institution of society, adapted to our European ways, seems pressingly desirable. O Guachos, South-American and European, what a business is it, casting out your Seven Devils!—

But perhaps the reader would like to take a view of Dr. Francia in the concrete, there as he looks and lives; managing that thousand-sided business for his Paraguenos, in the time of Surgeon Rengger? It is our last extract, or last view of the Dictator, who must hang no longer on our horizon here:

'I have already said, that Doctor Francia, so soon as he found himself at the head of affairs, took-up his residence in the habitation of the former Governors of Paraguay. This Edifice, which is one of the largest in Assumpcion, was erected by the Jesuits, a short time before their expulsion, as a house of retreat for laymen, who devoted themselves to certain spiritual exercises instituted by Saint Ignatius. This Structure the Dictator repaired and embellished; he has detached it from the other houses in the City, by interposing wide streets. Here he lives, with four slaves, a little negro, one male and two female mulattoes, whom he treats with great mildness. The two males perform the functions of valet-de-chambre and groom. One of the two mulatto women is his cook, and the other takes care of his wardrobe.

'He leads a very regular life. The first rays of the sun very rarely find him in bed. So soon as he rises, the negro brings a chafing-dish, a kettle and a pitcher of water; the water is made to boil there. The Dictator then prepares, with the greatest possible care, his *maté*, or Paraguay tea. Having taken this, he walks under the Interior Colonnade that looks upon the court; and smokes a cigar, which he first takes care to unroll, in order to ascertain that there is nothing dangerous in it, though it is his own sister who makes-up his cigars for

him. At six o'clock comes the barber, an ill-washed, ill-clad mulatto, given to drink too; but the only member of the faculty whom he trusts in. If the Dictator is in good-humour, he chats with the barber; and often in this manner makes use of him to prepare the public for his projects: this barber may be said to be his *official gazette.* He then steps out, in his dressing-gown of printed calico, to the Outer Colonnade, an open space with pillars, which ranges all round the building: here he walks about, receiving at the same time such persons as are admitted to an audience. Towards seven, he withdraws to his room, where he remains till nine; the officers and other functionaries then come to make their reports, and receive his orders. At eleven o'clock, the *fiel de fecho* (principal secretary) brings the papers which are to be inspected by him, and writes from his dictation till noon. At noon all the officers retire, and Doctor Francia sits down to table. His dinner, which is extremely frugal, he always himself orders. When the cook returns from market, she deposits her provisions at the door of her master's room; the Doctor then comes out, and selects what he wishes for himself.

'After dinner he takes his *siesta.* On awakening, he drinks his *maté*, and smokes a cigar, with the same precautions as in the morning. From this, till four or five, he occupies himself with business, when the escort to attend him on his promenade arrives. The barber then enters and dresses his hair, while his horse is getting ready. During his ride, the Doctor inspects the public works, and the barracks, particularly those of the cavalry, where he has had a set of apartments prepared for his own use. While riding, though surrounded by his escort, he is armed with a sabre, and a pair of double-barrelled pocket-pistols. He returns home about nightfall, and sits down to study till nine; then he goes to supper, which consists of a roast pigeon and a glass of wine. If the weather be fine, he again walks in the Outer Colonnade, where he often remains till a very late hour. At ten o'clock he gives the watchword. On returning into the house, he fastens all the doors himself.'

Francia's brother was already mad. Francia banished his sister by and by, because she had employed one of his grenadiers, one of the public government's soldiers, on some errand of her own.[1] Thou lonely Francia!

[1] Rengger.

Francia's escort of cavalry used to 'strike men with the flat of their swords,' much more assault them with angry epithets, if they neglected to salute the Dictator as he rode out. Both he and they, moreover, kept a sharp eye for assassins; but never found any, thanks perhaps to their watchfulness. Had Francia been in Paris!—At one time also, there arose annoyance in the Dictatorial mind from idle crowds gazing about his Government House, and his proceedings there. Orders were given that all people were to move on, about their affairs, straight across this government esplanade; instructions to the sentry, that if any person paused to gaze, he was to be peremptorily bidden, Move on!—and if he still did not move, to be shot with ball-cartridge. All Paraguay men moved on, looking to the ground, swift as possible, straight as possible, through those precarious spaces; and the affluence of crowds thinned itself almost to the verge of solitude. One day, after many weeks or months, a human figure did loiter, did gaze in the forbidden ground: "Move on!" cried the sentry sharply; —no effect: "Move on!" and again none. "Move on!" for the third time:—alas, the unfortunate human figure was an Indian, did not understand human speech, stood merely gaping interrogatively:—whereupon a shot belches-forth at him, the whewing of winged lead; which luckily only whewed, and did not hit. The astonishment of the Indian must have been considerable, his retreat-pace one of the rapidest. As for Francia, he summoned the sentry with hardly suppressed rage, "What news, *Amigo?*" The sentry quoted "Your Excellency's order;" Francia cannot recollect such an order; commands now, that at all events such order cease.

It remains still that we say a word, not in excuse, which might be difficult, but in explanation, which is possible enough, of Francia's unforgivable insult to human Science in the person of M. Aimé Bonpland. M. Aimé Bonpland, friend of Humboldt, after much botanical wandering, did, as all men know, settle himself in Entre Rios, an Indian or Jesuit country close on Francia, now burnt to ashes by Artigas; and there set-up a considerable establishment for the improved culture of Paraguay tea. With an eye to botany? Botany? Why, yes,—

and perhaps to commerce still more. "Botany!" exclaims Francia: "It is shopkeeping agriculture, and tends to prove fatal to my shop! Who is this extraneous French individual? Artigas could not give him right to Entre Rios; Entre Rios is at least as much mine as Artigas's! Bring him to me!" Next night, or next, Paraguay soldiers surround M. Bonpland's tea-establishment; gallop M. Bonpland over the frontiers, to his appointed village in the interior; root out his tea-plants; scatter his four-hundred Indians, and—we know the rest! Hard-hearted Monopoly refusing to listen to the charmings of Public Opinion or Royal-Society presidents, charm they never so wisely! M. Bonpland, at full liberty some time since, resides still in South America;—and is expected by the Robertsons, not altogether by this Editor, to publish his Narrative, with a due running shriek.

Francia's treatment of Artigas, his old enemy, the bandit and firebrand, reduced now to beg shelter of him, was good; humane, even dignified. Francia refused to see or treat with such a person, as he had ever done; but readily granted him a place of residence in the interior, and 'thirty piasters a month till he died.' The bandit cultivated fields, did charitable deeds, and passed a life of penitence, for his few remaining years. His bandit followers, such of them as took to plundering again, says M. Rengger, 'were instantly seized and shot.'

On the other hand, that anecdote of Francia's dying Father —requires to be confirmed! It seems, the old man, who, as we saw, had long since quarrelled with his son, was dying, and wished to be reconciled. Francia "was busy;—what use was it?—could not come." A second still more pressing message arrives: "The old father dare not die unless he see his son; fears he shall never enter Heaven, if they be not reconciled." "Then let him enter ——!" said Francia, "I will not come!"[1] If this anecdote be true, it is certainly of all that are in circulation about Dr. Francia, by far the worst. If Francia, in that death-hour, could not forgive his poor old Father, whatsoever he had, or could in the murkiest sultriest imagination be con-

[1] Robertson.

ceived to have done against him, then let no man forgive Dr. Francia! But the accuracy of public rumour, in regard to a Dictator who has executed forty persons, is also a thing that can be guessed at. To whom was it, by name and surname, that Francia delivered this extraordinary response? Did the man make, or can he now be got to make, affidavit of it, to credible articulate-speaking persons resident on this earth? If so let him do it—for the sake of the Psychological Sciences.

One last fact more. Our lonesome Dictator, living among Guachos, had the greatest pleasure, it would seem, in rational conversation,—with Robertson, with Rengger, with any kind of intelligent human creature, when such could be fallen-in with, which was rarely. He would question you with eagerness about the ways of men in foreign places, the properties of things unknown to him; all human interest and insight was interesting to him. Only persons of no understanding being near him for most part, he had to content himself with silence, a meditative cigar and cup of *maté*. O Francia, though thou hadst to execute forty persons, I am not without some pity for thee!

In this manner, all being yet dark and void for European eyes, have we to imagine that the man Rodriguez Francia passed, in a remote, but highly remarkable, not unquestionable or unquestioned manner, across the confused theatre of this world. For some thirty years, he was all the government his native Paraguay could be said to have. For some six-and-twenty years he was express Sovereign of it; for some three, or some two years, a Sovereign with bared sword, stern as Rhadamanthus: through all his years, and through all his days, since the beginning of him, a Man or Sovereign of iron energy and industry, of great and severe labour. So lived Dictator Francia, and had no rest; and only in Eternity any prospect of rest. A Life of terrible labour;—but for the last twenty years, the Fulgencio Plot being once torn in pieces, and all now quiet under him, it was a more equable labour: severe but equable, as that of a hardy draught-steed fitted in his harness; no longer plunging and champing; but pulling

steadily,—till he do all his rough miles, and get to his still *home*.

So dark were the Messrs. Robertson concerning Francia, they had not been able to learn in the least whether, when their Book came out, he was living or dead. He was living then, he is dead now. He is dead, this remarkable Francia; there is no doubt about it: have not we and our readers heard pieces of his Funeral Sermon! He died on the 20th of September 1840, as the Rev. Perez informs us; the people crowding round his Government House with much emotion, nay 'with tears,' as Perez will have it. Three Excellencies succeeded him; as some 'Directorate,' '*Junta Gubernativa*,' or whatever the name of it is, before whom this reverend Perez preaches. God preserve them many years.

AN ELECTION TO THE LONG PARLIAMENT.[1]

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AN ELECTION TO THE LONG PARLIAMENT.[1]

[1844.]

Anthony Wood, a man to be depended on for accuracy states as a fact that John Pym, Clerk of the Exchequer, and others, did, during the autumn of 1640, ride to and fro over England, inciting the people to choose members of their faction. Pym and others. Pym 'rode about the country to promote elections of the Puritanical brethren to serve in Parliament; wasted his body much in carrying-on the cause, and was himself,' as we well know, 'elected a Burgess.' As for Hampden, he had long been accustomed to ride: 'being a person of antimonarchical principles,' says Anthony, 'he did not only ride, for several years before the Grand Rebellion broke out, into Scotland, to keep consults with the Covenanting brethren there; but kept his circuits to several Puritanical houses in England; particularly to that of Knightley in Northamptonshire,' to Fawsley Park, then and now the house of the Knightleys, 'and also to that of William Lord Say at Broughton near Banbury in Oxfordshire:'[2]—Mr. Hampden might well be on horseback in election-time. These Pyms, these Hampdens, Knightleys were busy riding over England in those months: it is a little fact which Anthony Wood has seen fit to preserve for us.

A little fact, which, if we meditate it, and picture in any

[1] Fraser's Magazine, No. 178.

[2] Wood's *Athenæ* (Bliss's Edition), iii. 73, 59; Nugent's *Hampden*, i. 327.

measure the general humour and condition of the England that then was, will spread itself into great expanse in our imagination! What did they say, do, think, these patriotic missionaries, 'as they rode about the country?' What did they propose, advise, in the successive Townhalls, Country-houses, and 'Places of Consult?' John Pym, Clerk of the Exchequer, Mr. Hampden of Great Hampden, riding to and fro, lodging with the Puritan Squires of this English Nation, must have had notable colloquies! What did the Townspeople say in reply to them? We have a great curiosity to know about it: how this momentous General Election, of autumn 1640, went on; what the physiognomy or figure of it was; how 'the remarkablest Parliament that ever sat, the father of all Free British Parliaments, American Congresses and French Conventions, that have sat since in this world,' was got together!

To all which curiosities and inquiries, meanwhile, there is as good as no answer whatever. Wood's fact, such as it is, has to twinkle for us like one star in a heaven otherwise all dark, and shed what light it can. There is nothing known of this great business, what it was, what it seemed to be, how in the least it transacted itself, in any town, or county, or locality. James Heath, 'Carrion Heath' as Smelfungus calls him, does, in his *Flagellum* (or *Flagitium*[1] as it properly is), write some stuff about Oliver Cromwell and Cambridge Election; concerning which latter and Cleaveland the Poet there is also another blockheadism on record:—but these, and the like, mere blockheadisms, pitch-dark stupidities and palpable falsities,—what can we do with these? Forget them, as soon as possible, to all eternity;—that is the evident rule: Admit that we do honestly know nothing, instead of misknowing several things, and in some sense all things, which is a great misfortune in comparison!

Contemporary men had no notion, as indeed they seldom have in such cases, what an enormous work they were going-

[1] Or, *Life of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1663): probably, all things considered, the brutallest Platitude this English Nation has to show for itself in writing.

on with ; and nobody took note of this election more than of any former one. Besides, if they had known, they had other business than to write accounts of it for *us*. But how could anybody know that this was to be the *Long* Parliament, and to cut his Majesty's head off, among other feats? A very 'spirited election,' I dare believe: — but there had been another election that same year, equally spirited, which had issued in a *Short* Parliament, and mere 'second Episcopal War.' There had been three prior elections, sufficiently spirited ; and had issued, each of them, in what we may call a futile shriek ; their Parliaments swiftly vanishing again.

Sure enough, from whatever cause it be, the world, as we said, knows not anywhere of the smallest authentic notice concerning this matter, which is now so curious to us, and is partly becoming ever more curious. In the old Memoirs, not entirely so dull when once we understand them ; in the multitudinous rubbish-mountains of old Civil-War Pamphlets (some thirty or fifty thousand of them in the British Museum alone, unread, unsorted, unappointed, unannealed !), which will continue dull till, by real labour and insight, of which there is at present little hope, the ten-thousandth part of them be extracted ; and the nine-thousand nine-hundred and ninety-nine parts of them be eaten by moths, or employed in domestic cookery when fuel grows scarce ;—in these chaotic masses of old dull printing, there is not to be met with, in long years of manipulation, one solitary trait of any election, in any point of English land, to this same Long Parliament, the remarkablest that ever sat in the world. England was clearly all alive then,—with a moderate crop of corn just reaped from it ; and other things not just ready for reaping yet. In Newcastle, in 'the Bishoprick' and that region, a Scotch Army, bristling with pike and musket, sonorous with drum and psalm-book, all snugly garrisoned and billeted 'with 850*l.* a-day ;' over in Yorkshire an English Army, not quite so snugly ; and a 'Treaty of Rippon' going on ; and immense things in the wind, and Pym and Hampden riding to and fro to hold 'consults :' it must have been an election worth looking at ! But none of us will see it ; the Opacities have been

pleased to suppress this election, considering *it* of no interest. It is erased from English and from human Memory, or was never recorded there,—(owing to the stupor and dark nature of that faculty, we may well say). It is a lost election; swallowed in the dark deeps: *premit atra Nox.* Black Night; and this one fact of Anthony Wood's more or less faintly twinkling there!

In such entire darkness, it was a welcome discovery which the present Editor made, of certain official or semi-official Documents, legal testimonies and signed affidavits, relative to the Election for Suffolk, such as it actually showed itself to men's observation in the Town of Ipswich on that occasion: Documents drawn-up under the exact eye of Sir Simonds D'Ewes, High-Sheriff of Suffolk; all carefully preserved these two centuries, and still lying safe for the inspection of the curious among the *Harley Manuscripts* in the British Museum. Sir Simonds, as will be gradually seen, had his reasons for getting these Documents drawn-up; and luckily, when the main use of them was over, his thrifty, historical turn of mind induced him to preserve them for us. A man of sublime Antiquarian researches, Law-learning, human and divine accomplishments, and generally somewhat Grandisonian in his ways; a man of scrupulous Puritan integrity, of highflown conscientiousness, exactitude and distinguished perfection; ambitious to be the pink of Christian country-gentlemen and magistrates of counties; really a most spotless man and High-Sheriff: how shall he suffer, in Parliament, or out of it, to the latest posterity, any shadow from election-brabbles or the like indecorous confusion to rest on his clear-polished character? Hence these Documents;—for there had an unseemly brabble, and altercation from unreasonable persons, fallen-out at this Election, which 'might have ended in blood,' from the nose or much deeper, had Sir Simonds been a less perfect High-Sheriff. Hence these Documents, we say; and they are preserved to us.

The Documents, it must be at once owned, are somewhat of the wateriest: but the reader may assure himself they are

of a condensed, emphatic and very potent nature, in comparison with the generality of Civil-War documents and records! Of which latter indeed, and what quality they are of, the human mind, till once it has earnestly tried them, can form no manner of idea. We had long heard of Dulness, and thought we knew it a little; but here first *is* the right dead Dulness, Dulness its very self! Ditch-water, fetid bilge-water, ponds of it and oceans of it; wide-spread genuine Dulness without parallel in this world: such is the element in which that history of our Heroic Seventeenth Century as yet rots and swims! The hapless inquirer swashes to and fro, in the sorrow of his heart: if in an acre of stagnant water, he can pick-up half a peascod, let him thank his stars!

This Editor, in such circumstances, read the D'Ewes Documents, and re-read them, not without some feeling of satisfaction. Such as they are, they bring one face to face with an actual election, at Ipswich, 'in Mr. Hambies' field, on Monday the 19th of October 1640, an extreme windy day.' There is the concrete figure of that extreme windy Monday, Monday gone Two-hundred and odd years: the express image of Old Ipswich, and Old England, and that Day; exact to Nature herself,—though in a most dark glass, the more is the pity! But it is a glass; it is the authentic *mind*, namely, or *seeing-faculty* of Sir Simonds D'Ewes and his Affidavit-makers, who did look on the thing with eyes and minds, and got a real picture of it for themselves. Alas, we too could see *it*, the very thing as it then and there was, through these men's poor limited authentic picture of it here preserved for us, had we eyesight *enough*;—a consideration almost of a desperate nature! Eyesight *enough*, O reader: a man in that case were a god, and could do various things!—

We will not overload these poor Documents with commentary. Let the public, as we have done, look with its own eyes. To the commonest eyesight a markworthy old fact or two may visibly disclose itself; and in shadowy outline and sequence, to the interior regions of the seeing-faculty, if the eyesight be beyond common, a whole world of old facts,—an old contemporary England at large, as it stood and lived, on

that 'extreme windy day,'—may more or less dimly suggest themselves. The reader is to transport himself to Ipswich; and, remembering always that it is two centuries and four years ago, look about him there as he can. Some opportunity for getting these poor old Documents copied into modern hand has chanced to arise; and here, with an entire welcome to all faithful persons who are sufficiently patient of dulness for the sake of direct historical knowledge, they are given-forth in print.

It is to be premised that the Candidates in this Election are Three: Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston and Sir Philip Parker on the Puritan side; and Mr. Henry North, son of Sir Roger North, on the Court or Royalist side. Sir Roger is himself already elected, or about to be elected, for the borough of Eye;—and now Mr. Henry, heir-apparent, is ambitious to be Knight of the Shire. He, if he can, will oust one of the two Puritans, he cares little which, and it shall be tried on Monday.

To most readers these Candidates are dark and inane, mere Outlines of Candidates: but Suffolk readers, in a certain dim way, recognise something of them. 'The Parkers still continue in due brilliancy, in that shire: a fine old place, at Long Melford, near Bury:—but this Parker,' says our Suffolk monitor,[1] 'is of another family, the family of Lord Morley-and-Monteagle, otherwise not unknown in English History.[2] The Barnardistons too,' it would appear, had a noble mansion in the east side of the county, though it has quite vanished now, and corn is growing on the site of it,' and the family is somewhat eclipsed. The Norths are from Mildenhall, from Finborough, Laxfield; the whole world knows the North kindred, Lord Keeper Norths, Lord Guildford Norths, of which these

[1] D. E. Davy, Esq, of Ufford, in that County, whose learning in Suffolk History is understood to be supreme, and whose obliging disposition we have ourselves experienced.

[2] 'It was to William Parker, Lord Monteagle, ancestor of this Sir Philip that the Letter was addressed which saved the King and Parliament from the Gunpowder Plot. Sir Philip had been High-Sheriff in 1637; he died in 1675.'—*Dryasdust Mss.*

Norths of ours are a junior twig. Six lines are devoted by Collins Dryasdust[1] to our Candidate Mr. Henry, of Mildenhall, and to our Candidate's Father and Uncle; testifying indisputably that they lived, and that they died.

Let the reader look in the dim faces, Royalist and Puritan, of these respectable Vanished Gentlemen; let him fancy their old Great Houses, in this side of the county or that other, standing all young, firm, fresh-pargeted, and warm with breakfast-fire, on that 'extreme windy morning,' which have fallen into such a state of dimness now! Let the reader, we say, look about him in that old Ipswich; in that old-vanished population: perhaps he may recognise a thing or two. There is the old 'Market Cross,' for one thing; 'an old Grecian circular building, of considerable diameter; a dome raised on distinct pillars, so that you could go freely in and out between them; a figure of Justice on the top;' which the elderly men in Ipswich can still recollect, for it did not vanish till some thirty years ago. The 'Corn Hill' again, being better rooted, has not vanished hitherto, but is still extant as a Street and Hill; and the Townhall stands on one side of it.

Samuel Duncon, the Town-constable, shall speak first. 'The Duncons were a leading family in the Corporation of Ipswich; Robert Duncon was patron of the' &c. &c.: so it would appear; but this Samuel, Town-constable, must have been of the more decayed branches, poor fellow! What most concerns us is, that he seems to do his constabling in a really judicious manner, with unspeakable reverence to the High-Sheriff; that he expresses himself like a veracious person, and writes a remarkably distinct hand. We have sometimes, for light's sake, slightly modified Mr. Duncon's punctuation; but have respected his and the High-Sheriff's spelling, though it deserves little respect,—and have in no case, never so slightly, meddled with his sense. The questionable *italic letters in brackets* are evident interpolations;—omissible, if need be.

[1] *Peerage*, iv. 62, 63 (London, 1741).

SUFFOLKE ELECTION.[1]

No. I.

[*Samuel Duncon testifieth.*]

'Memorandum, That upon Monday the 19th day of October this present year 1640, the election of two Knights for the Shire was at Ipswich in Suffolke; the Writt being read about eight of the clocke in the morning: and in the Markett Crosse where the County Court is generally kept, Mr. Henry North sonne of Sir Roger North was there at the reading of the said Writt. All this time the other two, namely, Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston and Sir Philip Parker, were at the King's Head; and Mr. North was carried about neare halfe an houre before the other two came [*Carried about in his chair by the jubilant people: Let all men see, and come and vote for him. The chairing was then the first step, it would seem*]; and after the other two were taken there, Mr. North was carried into the field neare the said towne, called Mr. Hambie's feild:[2] and the said High-Sherriffe was there polling, about halfe-an-houre before the other two Knights knewe either of his being polling, or of the High-Sherriff's intention to take the Poll in that place. But at length the two Knights were carried into the said feild; and before they came there, the tables which were sett for them, the said Sir Nathaniel and Sir Philip, were thrust downe, and troadden under foot [*Such a pressure and crowding was there!*]; and they both caused but one table to bee sett there,—till about three of the clocke of the afternoone, the said day, about which time Sir Nathaniel had another table sett there, a little remote from the other. And when they went about to poll, they wanted a clarke. I, Samuell Duncon, standing by, some requested mee; and upon the Under-Sherriff's allowance, I did take names, and one Mr. Fishar with mee, he for Sir Nathaniel, and myselfe for Sir Philip; although many that came for the one, came for the other; and if any came for Mr. North (as there did some),

[1] From *Harleian Mss.*, British Museum (Parliamentary Affairs collected by Sir S. D'Ewes), No. 165, fol. 5–8.

[2] Or 'Hanbie's field,' as the Duncon *Ms.* has it: he probably means Hamby. 'A family of the latter name had property at Ipswich and about it, in those times.'—*Dryasdust Mss.*

wee tooke them likewise for him. And Mr. John Clinch of Creting,[1] Sir Roger North's brother-in-law, or some other of Mr. North his [*"North his" means North's*] friends, stoode by all the time. And after the space of one quarter of an houre, came Sir Robert Crane,[2] and did oppose against Mr. Fishar; and then came the said High-Sherriffe himselfe to the table, wheere wee weere writing, and discharged Mr. Fishar, and tooke his papers of him; and at the request of Sir Roger North did appoint one Mr. John Sheppard to write in his place, who then tooke names for Sir Nathaniel, and myselfe for Sir Philip. About one houre after, Sir Robert Crane and the rest of Mr. North his friends moved Sir Nathaniel that wee might leave off polling for him, and Sir Philip, and take the Poll only for Mr. North; for, they said, Mr. North's table was much pestred, and many of his men would be gone out of towne, being neare night—and the like reasons. Which reasons might as well have been alledged in the behalfe of Sir Nathaniel and Sir Philip: but without reasoning, Sir Nathaniel did grant them their desire; and presently Sir Robert Crane went and called all that were for Mr. North to come to that table; and soe Mr. Sheppard and myselfe tooke for Mr. North as long as wee could well see; which I think was about one houre. Having done, wee gave upp our Bookes, and did goe to Mrs. Penning's house in Ipswich, where Sir Roger North was then with the said High-Sherriffe: and I heard no oppositions at that time taken against any thing that had passed that Monday at the taking of the said Poll; but Sir Roger North and the said High-Sherriffe did part very curteously and friendly, each from the other.

'But by the next morning it was generally thought, that Sir Nathaniel and Sir Philip had outstripped Mr. North, about 500 voices apiece, at the Poll taken on the Monday foregoing; soe as the said Sir Roger being, it seemes, much vexed thereat, came to the said High-Sherriffe's lodging about eight of

[1] 'The family of Clinch, or Clench as it should be spelt, were of note in Suffolk. They descended from John Clench of' &c. &c., 'buried in 1607, with a handsome monument to his memory. He was one of the Justices of the King's Bench. His Grandson, John Clench, Esq., was High-Sheriff of the County in 1639.'—*Dryasdust Mss.* This, I think, is our and Samuel Duncon's Clench.

[2] 'Sir Robert Crane was descended from a Norfolk family, which migrated,' &c. He was created a Baronet in May 1627. He was of Chilton Hall, near Sudbury; he died in 1642.'—*Ibid.*

the clocke, the same Teuesday morning, and begann to make cavills against what had passed at the taking of the Poll the day past. And then they went to the Poll againe; and two tables were sett in the Markett Crosse,[1] whereat the Poll was taken for Mr. North by four clarkes on oath, two writing the same names. About 12 of the clocke, the same forenoone, the Court was adjourned to two of the clocke in the afternoone. About which time the said High-Sheriffe repairing thither againe, did with much patience attend the same Mr. North's Poll, sitting sometimes about a quarter of an houre before any came in to give their voice, for the said Mr. North. And as the said High-Sheriffe was soe attending his [*Sir Roger North's*] said sonne's Poll, about three of the clocke the same afternoone, came Sir Roger North, accompanied with divers gentlemen, most of them armed with swords or rapiers [*Lo, there!*], into the said Mearkett Crosse; and the said High-Sherriffe very respectfully attending with silence to what the said Sir Roger North had to say, he fell into most outrageous, unjust and scandalous criminations against the said High-Sherriffe; charging him to have dealt partiallie and unjustlie, and to have wronged his said sonne. To all which violent accusations, the said High-Sherriffe, having desired silence, did answeare soe fully and readily, as it gave all unpartiall and honest men full satisfaction. A while after the said High-Sherriffe's speech was ended, the said Sir Roger North with divers others went upp and downe in such a manner on the said Corne Hill, as I, the said Samuell Duncon, fearing that much danger and bloudshedd might ensue, and being one of the constables of Ipswich, did in the King's Majestie's name charge some of the said company to desist [*Highly proper, in such a place as the Corne Hill!*]'

'Samuel Duncon.'

No. II.

[*Samuel Duncon testifieth for the second time.*]

'*Monday, the* 19*th of October* 1640.

'When I came into the field where the Polling was for the Knights of the Shire, the first place I settled at was an Elm [*Nota bene*] in the middle of the feild, where there were polling for Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston and Sir Philip Parker: and

[1] 'A spacious place; there was room enough in it: see the old copperplate of 1780.'—*Dryasdust Mss.*

there was a long table, at one end whereof was Mr. Robert Dowe, clerke ; and he did write for both the foresaid knights ; and Mr. Farran, Under-Sherriffe,[1] did sweare the people ; and at the other end of the same table did Mr. Robert Clarke write for Sir Philip, and Mr. Peter Fisher wrot for Sir Nathaniel ; and sometimes Mr. Chopping[2] did sweare the people at that end, and sometimes Mr. Robert Clerke did sweare them.

'After I had stood there one houre or thereabout, Mr. Robert Clerke his nose did bleede [*Ominous?*], so as he coulde not write, and then he called mee to write in his stead, and the Under-Sherriffe required me so to doe ; which I did till his nose left bleeding, and then he tooke the Booke again and wrot himselfe. Then I stood by againe about another houre, and then with the violent presse of the people, the tressolls brake, and the table fell downe to the ground [*Aha!*]. There was a cessation of writing until the table was set up againe. In that interim, Peter Fisher and Samuel Duncon went to the Conduit-head [*Mark!*] ; and having a table sett up there, they did write there for the two foresaid Knights : and then, at the former place [*Beside the big Elm, namely, under its creaking boughs, and brown leaves dropping*], when the table was up againe, Mr. Dowe wrot still for the two Knights, and then [*"Then" signifies "meanwhile"*] at the other end of the table was Mr. Robert Clarke writing for Sir Philip. And then there was no man at that end writing for Sir Nathaniel ; which presently bred this confusion inevitable, viz. when men had with much trouble pressed to the end of the table (where Mr. Clarke did only take for Sir Philip), and desired to be sworne and entered for both, Mr. Clerke would sweare and take them onely for Sir Philip ; and would send them to the place where Mr. Fisher was writing for Sir Nathaniel [*And I for Sir Philip still? No, I had ceased ; the official nose having done bleeding : see presently*], at the foresaid Conduit-head : whereupon men, being unwilling to endure so much trouble as to presse twice into such great crowdes, began to murmure and complaine [*Very naturally!*], saying they would not endure this, but desired they might be discharged at one place ; also Mr. Fisher came to Mr. Clerke, and demanded the reason Why there was

[1] 'Under-Sheriff,' so Duncon calls him ; but the real Under-Sheriff was Mr. Choppine, to whom this Mr. Farran must have been assistant or temporary substitute.

[2] 'A.D. 1640. John Choppine, Gent., Under-Sheriff ; Tallemach Choppine of Coddenham's brother.'—*Harleian Mss.* No. 99, fol. 7.

no one to take for Sir Nathaniel at that end of the table, where the said Clerke did take names for Sir Philip? and Mr. Fisher said that men complained because they were not despatched for both at once; and said also they would goe away, and not endure this crowding twice. When I [*Having now quitted the Conduit-head, and come to the Elm again*] saw no clerke to write for Sir Nathaniel, I desired this inconvenience aforesaid might be prevented; and seeing a Paper Booke in Mr. Farran his hands, I sayd to him, "Mr. Farran, you see there wants a clerke at the other end of the table to write for Sir Nathaniel," and then Mr. Farran gave me the Paper Booke in his hands, and sayd to mee, "Write you, for Sir Nathaniel at that end of the table," where Mr. Clerke did write for Sir Philip. And then I, having the Booke, did write for Sir Nathaniel till the evening. And at that end of the table where ["*table where*," *not* "*end where*"] Mr. Robert Dowe did write at one end, and Mr. Clerke and myselfe at the other end, there were present two or three knightes or gentlemen, all the whole time, of Mr. North's partie: sometimes Sir Robert Crane, and Mr. — Waldegrave, and Mr. John Smith,[1] and Mr. Henry North sen. [*This is the Candidate's Uncle, come over from Laxfield, I think, to see fair play.*] No man, all that time, made any observation against mee; and yet they stoode, some of these and sometimes some others of that side, all the afternoone, and did supravise all the clerkes. Also, at night, when wee were breaking up, Mr. Clerke demanded of Mr. Clinch [*Clinch of Creting,—whom we saw above*] if he could find any fault with us in doing any wrong? To which he answered, "He could not as yet, if there were no other carriage than there had yet beene," or to that effect. Neither was there any, that day, who did find fault with the clerkes, in my hearing; but sometimes some muttering and complaining about some particular questions in the oaths, which (as soon as they came to the High-Sherriffe his intelligence) were rectified and settled.

'And at night, when wee broke up, I gave my Booke that I wrott in, unto the Under-Sheriffe, Mr. Farran, before I stirred from the table where I wrott; and then wee came home with

[1] Smith is undecipherable; being 'very frequent' in Suffolk, as elsewhere. Of Waldegrave, the Monitor says, 'There being no Christian name mentioned, it is hard to say what individual is meant. Doubtless he was one of the Waldegraves of Smallbridge. Wm. Waldegrave, Esq., son of Sir Wm. Waldegrave, Knight, of Smallbridge in Bures, Suffolk, would be about forty years of age about this time:'—let us fancy it was he.

the High-Sheriffe to Mrs. Penning's howse [*Did she keep the King's Head?*] ; and there did the High-Sheriffe call for all the Bookes from the Under-Sheriffe, and in the presence of Sir Roger North, and Mr. North his brother, and more other gentlemen, locke up all the Bookes in a little truncke ; and sett that truncke in his owne lodging-chamber ; and gave the key thereof to his Under-Sheriffe, who lodged not in that howse where the Bookes were.

'*Tuesday, the 20th of October* 1640.

'In the morning Mr. High-Sheriffe came into the Corne Hill at Ipswich and the Knights, to make an end of polling. Whereupon the clerkes who wrot the day before appeared, and wrot againe as before. But Mr. High-Sheriffe commanded that wee should all of us make new Bookes to write in ; for he would not stirr those that were wrot-in the day before : and so wee did, and wrot in new Bookes.

'And all that day also while wee wrot, there were divers supravisors ; but they found no fault with the clerkes in my hearing : and at noone, when wee brake upp, I gave my Booke againe into Mr. Farran, before I stirred from the table where I wrot. And in the afternoone, wee came together againe, and made an end of polling ; and towards the end of polling, before wee had done polling at the table where I sat to write, Sir Roger with the rest of the knights and gentlemen went about the Corne Hill, swinging their caps and hats crying, "A North! A North!" [*Questionable*] ; which caused me to admire ; because I knew the Bookes were not cast up [*And nobody could yet tell who was to win*].

'Then after that, Mr. High-Sheriffe went to Mrs. Penning's, and the Knights followed him, and the clerkes to summe up the Bookes. But the night grew on so fast, that they could not be ended that night : then Mr. High-Sheriffe did againe locke up the Bookes in the same truncke they were in before, and gave the key to Mr. — North, and sett the truncke into his chamber, and appointed to meete the next day upon [*Means, in it, not on the roof of it; the figure of Justice stands on the roof*] the Townhall.'

[*Samuel Duncon still testifieth.*]

'Memorandum, That on Tuesday October 20, in the afternoone, this present year 1640, the High-Sherriffe of the county of Suffolk, sitting in the Markett Crosse [*Note him!*], in Ips-

wich, where hee kept his County Court, and had that afternoone taken the poll of divers that came to give their voices for Mr. Henry North, sonne of Sir Roger North [*Grammar fails a little*]. And when it appeared, after some stay, that noe more weere likely to come, and Mr. Gardener Webb[1] speaking concerning the said election averred That the said High-Sherriffe had been damnably base in all his carriage. Whereupon I, Samuel Duncon, hearing the same, did [*As an enemy of blasphemy, and Constable of this Borough*] enforme the said High-Sheriffe of that outrageous and scandalous speeche ; who thereupon asking the said Webb, Whether hee had spoken the said wordes or not? he answered, with much impudence and earnestness, That he had said soe, and would maintain it. And did thereupon in the presence of the said High-Sherriffe call mee, the said Samuel Duncon, base rascall and rogue [*He shall answer it!*] because I had acquainted the said High-Sherriffe with his said injurious speeches.

'Samuel Duncon.'

No. III.

[*Samuel Duncon still testifieth, though without signature.*]

'*Wednesday the* 21*st October* 1640.

'The truncke was brought up into the Townhall, and the High-Sherriffe and the rest of the knights and gentlemen came up together to make end of their Bookes : and they passed quietly untill my Booke was produced ; and then Mr. North protested against my Booke, and Sir Roger came up and exclaimed at mee, and said I was no fitt clerke, neyther authorised to write. Then was Mr. Farran called, and asked How I came to write? Which he answered, "He never saw mee before Monday in all his life, but wanting one to write, and I standing by, he requested mee to write." The High-Sherriffe told Sir Roger, "He could not but accept of my Booke, and would doe so if I had wrot for his own sonne ;" and for myselfe, as I then testified, so am I ready to make oath, being lawfully called, That my Booke was just and right, and that I did not write one name that was not sworne for Sir Nathaniel ; and not-

[1] 'Gardiner Webb was the son of William Webb of Ixworth in Suffolk, attorney-at-law. He became heir, in right of his mother (who was one of the Gardiners of Elmswell), to considerable landed property' (*Drysdust, Mss.*); and seems to have been a hot-tempered loose-spoken individual.

withstanding Sir Roger and other knights did speake their large pleasures of mee and charged me with direct and manifest outrage [*Maltreating the honest Town-constable : shameful !*].

'In conclusion, the High-Sherriffe finished the Bookes, and soe we brake up that night, and the next day we proclaymed Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston and Sir Philip Parker Knights of the Shire for the ensuing Parliament.'

[Samuel Duncon : signature not given.]

'To all these Three Pages I am ready to give testimony; and to the whole substance thereof.

'Edw. Bestwall.'[1]

No. IV.

[*Samuel Duncon still testifieth.*]

'Memorandum, Upon Tuesday morning some women [*Puritan women ; zealous beyond discretion !*] came to be sworne for the two foresaid Knights ; and Mr. Robert Clerke did suddenly take some of them ; but as soone as Mr. High-Sherriffe had intelligence of it, wee had worde brought to the table where Mr. Clerke and myselfe wrot, that Mr. Sheriffe would have us take no women's oaths ; and both the Knights desired that those that were taken might be put out, and that we should take no more : and so we refused the rest of the women after that notice from Mr. High-Sherriffe ; and when Mr. High-Sherriffe cast up the Bookes, he cast out the women out of the generall summe.'

[Samuel Duncon : signature not given.]

These transactions are of 'so high a nature,' it is probable a Parliamentary Committee will have to sit upon them : justice between the vociferous irrational Sir Roger and the discreet unspotted Sir Simonds will then be done. Duncon backed by Bestwall, in writing, and by the Under-Sheriffs Farran and Choppine *vivâ voce* if needful, and indeed by the whole town of Ipswich if needful,—may sufficiently evince that

[1] Bestwall is not known to Dryasdust. An impartial onlooker, and presumably nothing more. The 'Three Pages' he vouches for are all these testimonies of Duncon's from beginning to end,—*seven* pages as printed here.

Mr. High-Sheriff's carriage in the business was perfection or nearly so. The accurate Magistrate meanwhile thinks good to subjoin a succinct Narrative of his own, which he is ready to sign when required ; every word of which can be proved by the oath of witnesses. No. V. is clearly by D'Ewes himself; there are even some directions to his clerk about writing it fair.

No. V.

A short and true relation of the Carriage of the Election of the Knights for the Countie of Suffolke at Ipswich, which beganne there upon Monday morning, October 19, *this present Year* 1640, *and ended upon the Thursday morning then next ensuing.*[1]

'The Under-Sherriffe having had order from the High-Sheriffe of the same Countie to provide honest and able men to take the Poll, and to looke to gett ready materialls for the Election, went to Ipswich on Friday night: and the said High-Sherriffe was purposed to have gone thither the next day, but that hee understood the small-pox [*Nota bene*] was exceeding spread in the said towne. Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston and Sir Philip Parker joined together, and Henry North stood singlie, for the place of Knights of the Shire.

'The said High-Sherriffe came to Ipswich about eight of the clocke of the said Monday morning.[2] To whom Sir Roger North, father of the said Mr. Henry North, and divers other gentlemen repairing, hee yeilded to them to have the Poll taken in a feild neare the towne ; and soe, after a little discourse without further stay, went to the Markett Crosse, and caused the King's Majestie's Writt to bee published ; by which meanes the said Mr. North was carried about a good while before the other Knights [*Yes!*] had notice that the said Writt was published. And this the said High-Sherriffe did about an houre-and-halfe sooner than he was by law compelled to ; that there might be noe just ground of cavill, as if he had delaied the business [*Sir Simonds is himself known to*

[1] From *Harleian Mss.* British Museum, collected by Sir S. D'Ewes, No. 158, page 275.

[2] He lived at Stow Hall (*Autobiography of D'Ewes*); he must have started early.

be a Puritan ; already elected, or about to be elected, for the town of Sudbury. So high stood Sudbury then ; sunk now so low !].

'After the publication of which, the said High-Sherriffe withdrew himselfe to make haste into the said feild [*Mr. Hambie's field ; with the Conduit-head and big Elms in it*] to take the Poll. But before hee got thither, or any place was made readie for the clerkes to write, the said Mr. North was brought into the feild [*Triumphantly in his chair*], and many of the gentrie as well as others that were of his partie pressed soe upon the place where the planks and boards were setting upp, as they could not be fastened or finished. All this time the other two Knights knew yett nothing that the said Poll was begunn in the said feild : soe as [*So that*] the said High-Sherriffe begann Mr. North's poll alone, and admitted a clerke. The said Sir Roger North proffered to write the names, with the clerke his [*The High-Sheriff's*] Under-Sherriffe had before appointed, which hee [*The High-Sheriff*] conceived hee was not in law bound unto.

'Having then taken the Poll a while, in the said Sir Roger North's presence and his said sonne's, the companie did tread upon the said planks with such extreme violence, as having divers times borne them downe upon the said High-Sherriffe ; and hee having used all meanes of entreatie and perswasion to desire them to beare off, as did the said Sir Roger North also,—the said High-Sherriffe was at the last forced to give over ; and soe gave speedie order, by the advice of the said Sir Roger North and others, To have three severall tables [*"Three:" Duncon notices only two of them ; one under the Elm, one at the Conduit-head, where the Puritan Knights were polling ; Sir Simonds himself superintends the Norths' table:— "three several tables"*] sett upp against trees or other places wheere they might not bee borne downe by violence. Which being verie speedilie performed, the said High-Sherriffe went in person and assisted at the said table wheere Mr. North's poll was taking, leaving his Under-Sherriffe and sworne deputies to attend the other tables, and to administer the oath, where the said Sir Roger and his sonne did appoint their kindred and friends to overview all that was done.

'The said High-Sheriffe did there, without eating or drinking, assist the said Mr. North, from about nine of the clocke in the morning till it grew just upon night, notwithstanding it was in the open feild, and a verie cold and windie day : and did in his owne person take much paines to dispatch the said Poll ; which had been much better advanced, if such as came to the

same had not treaded with such extreme violence one upon another. And whereas the said Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston came, about twelve of the clocke that forenoone, to the said High-Sherriffe, desiring him that all the companie might dissolve to goe to dinner, and that in respect of the great winde, the Poll in the afternoone might be taken in the said towne of Ipswich [*A very reasonable motion*] : The said High-Sherriffe, upon the said Mr. North's request to the contrarie, staide in the said feild till the shutting upp of the said day, as is aforesaid.

'What was done at the other tables the said High-Sherriffe knew not; but twice, upon complaint to him made, repaired thither, and certified and reconciled all matters. And during the same day alsoe the said High-Sherriffe did desire the said Sir Roger North to sende for another table to the place wheere he sate, being willing by all meanes to expedite the said Poll. And though there were not one man sworne for the other two Knights at the said Mr. North's table,—yet were there divers sworne at one of the other two tables for the said Mr. North; soe as, by this and the early beginning of the said Mr. North's poll, he had neare upon Two-hundred voices advantage of the other two Knights, had they come single; but they having manie hundreds that gave voices for them jointly, did before night outstrippe his votes by about Fowre-hundred apiece.

'At the said High-Sherriffe's rising from the said Poll on the said Monday night, hee tooke the Bookes from the said clerkes; and though by lawe he was tied to call noe partie to assist him in the laying them upp, yet to take away all possible cause of cavill, and to showe his integritie in the whole proceedings, hee called the said Sir Roger North to him, and desired him to accompanie him not only to the places wheere he received all the other Bookes or Papers from his said Under-Sherriffe, or the other clarkes that wrote them, but to his lodging also [*Mrs. Pennings*]; wheere hee bound and sealed upp the said Bookes and Papers, in the presence of the said Sir Roger North, and the said Under-Sherriffe; then locking them upp, gave the key to his said Under-Sherriffe to keepe; having first asked the said Sir Roger, If hee were not a person fitte to be trusted with it? And soe the said Sir Roger North departed, in a verie friendly and amicable manner, from the said High-Sherriffe, without so much as moving the least complaint against any of the said proceedings of that day.

'But it seemes, after his departure, having that night learned that the other Knights' polls outstripped his said sonne's by divers hundreds,—he came the next morning to the said High-

Sherriffe's lodging; and beganne, in violent and passionate termes, to charge him That hee had dealt unjustlie and partiallie in taking the Poll the day past [*Behold!*]: which at the present caused the said High-Sherriffe to wonder at that sudden and unexpected change; in respect the same Sir Roger parted in soe friendlie a manner from him the night foregoing, and that his indefatigable paines the day past deserved rather just acknowledgment than such unjust expostulation [*Certainly!*].

'The said High-Sherriffe therefore, having received the said key from his said Under-Sherriffe, in the presence of the said Sir Roger North, departed to the finishing of the said Poll. And whereas the other two Knights had but each of them one table allowed at which two clerkes only wrote; the said High-Sherriffe allowed the said Mr. North two tables and four clerkes: and at noone when the said Court was adjourned to two of the clocke of the same afternoone, the said High-Sherriffe having taken all the Bookes and Papers touching the same Poll from his Under-Sherriffe, or the clerkes which wrot them, desired the said Mr. North himselfe to accompanie him to his said lodging; which he did, and sawe them sealed and locked upp, and then had himselfe the key along with him.

'But all these testimonies of the said High-Sherriffe's impartialitie, and integritie in his proceedings, did in noe way mitigate the passion and indignation of the said Sir Roger North and some others, who now beganne to give the cause upp as conclamated[1] and lost; and therefore, though the said High-Sherriffe afterwardes in his numbering the votes of the said Poll did proceed with it in publike view, which hee might have done privately with his own clerkes, yet all the time after hee was often interrupted by most unjust and outrageous accusations and criminations; and by that meanes was almost as long, within an houre or two, in numbering the names of the said Poll, as hee was in taking the Poll itselfe. And in all differences that emergently fell out in numbering the said names, wheere there was but any equalitie of doubt, the said High-Sherriffe prevailed with the other two Knights to let the advantage rest on the said Mr. North's side.

'And though the said Sir Roger North came, on the said Tuesday in the afternoone, October 20th, into the Countie Court whilst the said High-Sherriff sate taking the Poll for

[1] *Conclamatum est*;—summoned nine times, and making no answer, is now to be held for *dead*.

his said sonne, and there used most outrageous and violent speeches against the said High-Sherriffe [*Hear Duncon too*], and told him "Hee would make it good with his bloud;" yet the said High-Sherriffe, seeing him accompanied with many young gentlemen and others, all or most of them armed with their swords and their rapiers [*Questionable!*], and fearing if he had made use of his just power to punish such an affront, much bloudshedd would have ensued, hee rather passed it over with an invincible patience; and only stoode upp, and desired silence to cleare himselfe from these unjust assertions and criminations which had been laid upon him; and resolved to expect redresse of his enemies from the High Court of Parliament [*Far the better plan, Mr. High-Sheriff!—which, among other good effects, has yielded us these present Documents withal*].

'Yet the said Sir Roger, not satisfied herewith, did, a little after, with the said companie of young gentlemen, and others that followed him, armed as aforesaid, or the greater part of them, go about the Corne Hill in Ipswich, where the Crosse stands, and cried, "A North! a North!" calling the saylers Water-dogges [*Puritan sailors;—mark it; had voted for the Gospel Candidates: "Water-dogs"*], and otherwise provoking them: one also of the companie drewe out his sword [*Lo, there!*], and brandished it about, nor did they give over till one of the Constables of Ipswich [*Sam Duncon; we saw him doing it*], being a sworne officer, charged them In the King's name to desist. The other two Knights, then sitting at the Poll, were fain at the instant to withdraw themselves in at the next windowe of the house wheere they stoode; having first besought the people and saylers to bee quiet, and not to answer violence with violence. For it is too apparent what was sought for in that dangerous action; and that if the said High-Sherriffe had, at that present, made use of his power to vindicate his owne affronts and sufferings, much bloudshedde might have ensued. Nor did the said High-Sherriffe suffer only from the violent language of the said Sir Roger North and some others of qualitie, but from two of the Webbes alsoe, whose Christian names were Roger and Gardiner [*The intemperate Webbes of Ixworth*], and such like persons of inferiour rank. The said High-Sherriffe having sate out all Wednesday October 21, from morning till night, in the West Hall or Court House in Ipswich aforesaid, without dining, did at last, notwithstanding the violent interruptions of the said Sir Roger North and others, finish the numbring of the said votes that

day; and found that the said Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston had 2140 voices, and Sir Philip Parker 2240 at the least,—besides the voices of all such persons as had been admitted without the said High-Sherriffe's knowledge, and were by him, upon numbring the same, disallowed and cast out. And the said Mr. Henry North had 1422.

'The next morning, October 22, the said High-Sherriffe made open publication of the said votes; and pronounced the said Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston and Sir Philip Parker the due elected Knights for the said Countie of Suffolke. And then caused the indentures witnessing the same election to be there ensealed and loyallie [*Lawfully*] executed.

''Tis true that, by the ignorance of some of the clerkes at the other tables, the oaths of some single women [*We saw it with Duncon*] that were freeholders were taken, without the knowledge of the said High-Sherriffe; who, as soon as he had notice thereof, instantlie sent to forbidd the same, conceiving it a matter verie unworthy of anie gentleman, and most dishonourable in such an election, to make use of their voices, although they might in law have been allowed; nor did the said High-Sherriffe allow of the said votes upon his numbring the said Poll, but with the allowance and consent of the said two Knights themselves discount them and cast them out.

'Now, though all the frivolous cavills, exceptions and protestations which were made against the foresaid Election by the said Sir Roger North or others did only concerne the Poll which was taken on the said Monday October 19; and are sufficiently answered with the verie preceding bare Narration of the true carriage thereof; and the rather, because himselfe accompanying the said High-Sheriffe the same evening when he received all the said Bookes and Papers from his said Under-Sherriffe, or such persons who had written them, did except against noe person, nor noe booke or paper, but consented to the sealing and locking them upp as Acts by which the matter in question was to be decided: Yet to satisfy all the world, such exceptions shall be heare set down, and clearly elevated or wiped away, which on the Tuesday and Wednesday following were pressed at Ipswich upon the said High-Sherriffe, with soe much outrageous passion as he could be scarce permitted to make answer to the same, by reason of the vociferation and clamours of the other partie.

'It was objected, That the said High-Sherriffe made delaies

on purpose to hinder the said Mr. North. This is so frivolous as 'tis not worth the answering; for the hindrance must have been equallie prejudiciale to the other two Knights as well as to him. Nay, on the contrarie, if any had wrong, they had; for the said High-Sherriffe soe hastened both the reading of the Writt, and goeing to the Poll as hee could not in time give the other two Knights notice of it. Soe as if the said Mr. North's companie had not by their overpressing violence throwne downe the boards and planks, wheere the said High-Sherriffe begann his the said Mr. North's poll alone, hee had gained neare upon an houre's advantage of the other two.

'Another objection, That the said High-Sherriffe refused such clerkes as the said Sir Roger North offered him; telling him hee was provided. This is a shamefull objection: as if the adverse partie were to provide men to take the poll. In this matter the said High-Sherriffe committed all to the trust and care of his Under-Sherriffe, who assured him hee had provided able and sufficient writers; yet did the said High-Sherriffe admitt a clarke, at the said Mr. North's poll, to write with the clerke his said Under-Sherriffe had provided, upon the motion of the said Sir Roger North.

'A third objection, That the said Mr. North lost many voices that were forced to goe out of towne the same Monday, because they could not be sworne. And soe doubtless did the other two likewise. And this was an invincible or remediless mischief on all sides. And 'tis evident the extreame pressing of the said Mr. North's votes hindred some hundreds from being dispatched. Besides, the said High-Sherriffe, at his entreatie, forbore his dinner [*The high-spirited immaculate man*], to sitt it out with him in the winde and cold till night; which deserved acknowledgement, and not rage and furie. Besides, he made the said Sir Roger North once or twice to send for another table to the same place; which courtesie the said High-Sherriffe afforded the said Mr. North the next morning, more than was allowed the other two Knights. And had the said Mr. North lost the place by one or two hundred voices, there might indeed be some colour that hee had miscarried because the Poll could not be finished on the said Monday night; which notwithstanding that it had been soe, yet the said High-Sherriffe was noe ways the cause thereof. But it is noe ways probable that the said Mr. North should be so ill-beloved or lightlie esteemed by such as appeared for him, that Seven-hundred persons would all depart and desert his cause, rather than abide and stay one

night in Ipswich to assist him with their votes. For by so many at the least did either of the other two Knights carrie it from him.

'Lastly, for conclusion of the whole. There is not a word or sillible sett down here, which is not notoriously known to manie, or which the said High-Sherriffe himself will not make good by his corporall oath being loyallie thereunto called, as also by the Bookes and Papers taken at the said Poll. Soe as never was innocency oppressed more by violence and fury; nor did his royall Majestie's Authoritie ever suffer more in the person of his Minister, than by the outrageous affronts offered unto, and unjust criminations heaped upon, the said High-Sherriffe at the said Election.'

Such is the account High-Sheriff D'Ewes has to give of himself, concerning his carriage in the Election of Knights of the Shire for Suffolk on this memorable occasion. He has written it down in an exact manner, to be ready for the Parliament, or for any and all persons interested; his clerks can now make copies of it as many as wanted. In the same Volume, No. 158 of the *Harley Collection*, there is another copy of this 'short and true relation,' with slight changes, principally in the punctuation; doubtless the immaculate Magistrate saw good to revise his Narrative more than once, and bring it still nearer perfection: he adds always this direction for the amanuenses: "They are desired who take a coppie of this to compare it with the originall after they have transcribed it,"—to be sure that they are exact. The original, which at any rate, in D'Ewes's hand, few persons could have read, is happily lost.

No notice in the *Commons Journals*, or elsewhere, indicates at all whether this case ever came before the Election Committee of the Long Parliament. But if it did, as is probable enough, we put it to the commonest sense of mankind, whether on Sir Roger North's side it could have a leg to stand on! No Election Committee can have difficulty here. Accordingly our Puritan Knights Sir Philip Parker and Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston sat indisputable as County Members for Suffolk, Mr. Henry North consoling himself as he could. Sir Simonds the High-Sheriff had another case before the Parliament; this namely, that he being High-Sheriff had returned *himself* for

Sudbury as duly elected there, which was thought informal by some: but in this too he prospered, and sat for that Borough. The intemperate Sir Roger, as we said, was admitted Member for Eye: but in the second year, mingling with 'Commission of Array' and other Royalist concerns, to small purpose as is likely, he, like many others, was 'disabled,'—cast forth, to Oxford, to 'malignancy,' disaster, and a fate that has not been inquired into.

Sir Simonds sat spotless for Sudbury; made occasional fantastic Speeches; and what is far more important for us, took exact Notes. Several of his Speeches he has preserved in writing; one, probably the most fantastic and pedantic of all, he sent forth in print: it relates to a dispute for seniority that had arisen between Oxford University and Cambridge; proves by unheard-of arguments and erudition, obsolete now to all mortals, that Cambridge, which was his own University, is by far the older,—older than Alfred himself, old as the very hills in a manner. Sir Simonds had the happiness to "shake hands with Mr. Prynne," when he came to the Parliament Committee on his deliverence from prison, and to congratulate Mr. Prynne on the changed aspects that then were. He wrote frequent letters to 'Abraham Wheloc' and many others. Far better, he almost daily dictated to his secretary, or jotted-down for him on scraps of paper, Notes of the Proceedings of the Long Parliament; which Notes still exist, safe in the British Museum; unknown seemingly to all the learned. He was a thin highflown character, of eminent perfection and exactitude, little fit for any solid business in this world, yet by no means without his uses there.

This one use, had there been no other, That he took Notes of the Long Parliament! Probably there is much light waiting us in these Notes of his, were they once disimprisoned into general legibility. They extend, in various forms, in various degrees of completeness, to the year 1645: but in that year, after the victory of Naseby, the questionable course things were taking gave offence to our Presbyterian Grandison; he sat mostly silent, with many thoughts, and forbore jotting any farther. Two of his written Speeches relate to

the confused negotiations with King Charles in the Isle of Wight; and are strong in the Royalist-Presbyterian direction. Colonel Pride, in the end, purged him out altogether, on the memorable 6th of December 1648; sent him, with four or five score others, 'over to the Tavern called Hell, kept by Mr. Duke, near Palaceyard,'—in the most unheard-of manner! For on questioning Mr. Hugh Peters, who had come across to them, By what law? By what shadow or vestige of any law, common or statutory, human or divine, is this unheard-of thing done?—the candid Mr. Peters, a man of good insight and considerable humour of character, answered these much-injured honourable gentlemen, "By the law of Necessity; truly by the power of the sword!" And they remained in a nearly rabid state; evidently purged out, without reason and without remedy; and had to retire to their respective counties, and there rhyme the matter for themselves as they could. Our poor Knight, Sir Simonds, soon after died; leaving an unspotted pedant character, and innumerable Manuscripts behind him. Besides his *History of the Parliaments of Queen Elizabeth*, a laborious compilation, which has since been printed, long ago, and still enjoys a good reputation of its sort, there are, as we count, some Ninety and odd Volumes of his Papers still extant in the British Museum; very worthless some of them, very curious others;—among which latter, certain portions of his *Autobiography*, already known in print,[1] are well worth reading; and these his *Notes of the Long Parliament* are perhaps, to us English, the most interesting of all the Manuscripts that exist there. Pury's Notes of the Long Parliament[2] appear to be irretrievably

[1] *Bibliotheca Topographica*, No. 6.

[2] 'Mr. Robinson asked me this morning,' Monday, 12 Jan. 1656–7, 'before the Speaker came, If I took Notes at Scot's Committee? I said, Yea. He told me He had much ado to forbear moving against my taking Notes, for it was expressly against the Orders of the House. I told him How *Mr. Dary* took Notes all the Long Parliament, and that Sir Symons D'Ewes wrote great volumes' of the like.—*Burton's Diary* (London, 1828), i. 341.

Of Sir Simonds's 'great volumes' we are here speaking: but who the 'Mr. Davy' is? No person of the name of *Davy* sat in the Long Par-

lost; Varney's, which also have never yet been made accessible,[1] extend over only a short early period of the business: it is on these Notes of D'Ewes's, principally, that some chance of understanding the procedure and real character of the Long Parliament appears still to depend for us. At present, after shiploads of historical printing, it is and remains mere darkness visible; if in these Notes by an accurate eye-witness there be no chance of light, then is light anywhere hopeless, and this remarkablest Parliament that ever sat will continue an enigma forever. In such circumstances, we call these Notes the most interesting of all Manuscripts. To an English soul who would understand what was really memorable and godlike in the History of his Country, distinguishing the same from what was at bottom *un*memorable and devil-like; who would bear in everlasting remembrance the doings of our noble heroic men, and sink into everlasting oblivion the doings of our loud ignoble quacks and sham-heroes,—what other record can be so precious? If English History have nothing to afford us concerning the Puritan Parliament but vague incoherences, inconceivabilities and darkness visible,—English History in this Editor's opinion, must be in a poor way!

It has often been a question, Why none of the Dryasdust Publishing Societies, the *Camden* or some other, has gone into these D'Ewes's *Mss.* in an efficient spirit, and fished-up somewhat of them? Surely it is the office of such Publishing Societies. Now when Booksellers are falling irrecoverably into the hand-to-mouth system, unable to publish any thing that will not repay them on the morrow morning; and in Printed Literature, as elsewhere, matters seem hastening

liament at all; or could by possibility have taken Notes! After Multifarious examination, and bootless trial of various names more or less resembling *Davy*, a sight of the original MS. of the thing called *Burton's Diary* was procured; and the name 'Davy' then straightway turned out to be *Pury*. Pury, or Purry, perhaps now written *Perry*, Alderman of Gloucester, and once well known as Member for that City. But of him or of his *Notes*, on repeated application there, no trace could now be found. If, as is possible, they still exist, in the buried state, in those regions,—to resuscitate and print them were very meritorious.

[1] Edited now (London, 1845) by Mr. Bruce.

pretty fast towards strange consummations: who else but the Printing Societies is to do it? They should lay aside vain Twaddle and Dilettanteism, and address themselves to their function by real Labour and Insight, as above hinted,—of which, alas, there is at present little hope!

Unhappily the Publishing Societies, generally speaking, are hitherto 'Dryasdust' ones; almost a fresh nuisance rather than otherwise. They rarely spend labour on a business, rarely insight; they consider that sham-labour, and a twilight of ignorance and buzzard stupidity, backed by prurient desire for distinction, with the subscription of a guinea a year, will do the turn. It is a fatal mistake! Accordingly the Books they print, intending them apparently to be read by some class of human creatures, are wonderful. Alas, they have not the slightest talent for knowing, first of all, what *not* to print; what, as a thing dead, and incapable of ever interesting or profiting a human creature more, ought not to be printed again, to steal away the valuable cash, and the invaluable time and patience of any man again! It is too bad. How sorrowful to see a mass of printed Publishings and Republishings, all in clear white paper, bound in cloth and gold lettered; concerning which you have to acknowledge that there should *another* artist be appointed to go in the rear of them, to fork them swiftly into the oven, and save all men's resources from one kind of waste at least. Mr. Chadwick proposes that sweepers shall go in the rear of all horses in London, and instantly sweep-up their offal, before it be trampled abroad over the pavement to general offence. Yes; but what sweeper shall follow the Dryasdust Printing Societies, the Authors, Publishers, and other Prurient-Stupids of this intellectual Metropolis, who are rising to a great height at present! Horse-offal, say Chadwick and the Philanthropists very justly, if not at once swept-up, is trampled abroad over the pavements, into the sewers, into the atmosphere, into the very lungs and hearts of the citizens: Good Heavens, and to think of Author-offal, and how *it* is trampled into the very souls of men; and how the rains and the trunkmakers do not get it abolished for years on years, in some instances!

TWO-HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY YEARS AGO:

A FRAGMENT ABOUT DUELS.

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TWO-HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY YEARS AGO:

A FRAGMENT ABOUT DUELS.

Duelling, one of the sincerities of Human Life, capable of taking many forms. A background of wrath does lie in every man and creature: Deadliest rage, and tenderest love, different manifestations of the same radical fire whereof Life is made. The elaboration an immense matter! (p. 99).

No. I. *Holles of Haughton.*

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No. II. *Croydon Races.*

Scotch favourites of King James, and English jealousies. Scotch Maxwell, and his insolent sardonic humour: Fashionable Young England in deadly emotion. How his Majesty laboured to keep peace. At the Croydon Races there arose sudden strife; and the hour looked really ominous: Philip Herbert (beautiful young man), of the best blood in England, switched over the head by an accursed Scotch Ramsay! And Philip Herbert's rapier—did *not* flash-out. (p. 104).

No. III. *Sir Thomas Dutton and Sir Hatton Cheek.*

How unthrifty everywhere is any solution of continuity, if it can be avoided! Peace here, if possible; over in the Netherlands is always fighting enough. Swash-buckler duels had now gone-out: Fifty years ago, serious men took to fighting with rapiers, and the buckler fell away: A more silent duel, but a terribly serious one. Hot tempers at the siege of Juliers: Under military duty; but not always to be so. Two gentlemen on Calais sands, in the height of silent fury strip to the shirt and waistband; in the two hands of each a rapier and dagger clutched: A bloody burial there that morning. Ill-fated English human creatures, what horrible confusion of the Pit is this? (p. 106).

TWO-HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY YEARS AGO:

A FRAGMENT ABOUT DUELS.[1]

[1850.]

DUELLING.

Duelling, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, was very prevalent; nor has it abated in King James's. It is one of the sincerities of Human Life, which bursts-through the thickest-quilted formulas; and in Norse-Pagan, in Christian, New-Christian, and all manner of ages, will, one way or the other, contrive to show itself.

A background of wrath, which can be stirred-up to the murderous infernal pitch, does lie in every man, in every creature; this is a fact which cannot be contradicted;—which indeed is but another phasis of the more general fact, that every one of us is a *Self*, that every one of us calls himself *I*. How can you be a Self, and not have tendencies to self-defence! This background of wrath,—which surely ought to blaze-out as seldom as possible, and then as nobly as possible,—may be defined as no other than the general radical fire, in its least elaborated-shape, whereof Life itself is composed. Its least-elaborated shape, this flash of accursed murderous rage;

[1] Found recently in *Leigh Hunt's Journal*, Nos. 1, 3, 6 (Saturday 7th December 1850, *et segq.*). Said there to be 'from a Waste-paper Bag' of mine. Apparently some fraction of a certain *History* (Failure of a History) *of James I.*, of which I have indistinct recollections.—(*Note of* 1857.)

—as the glance of mother's-love, and all intermediate warmths and energies and genialities, are the same element *better* elaborated. Certainly the elaboration is an immense matter,—indeed, is the whole matter! But the figure, moreover, under which your infernal element itself shall make its appearance, nobly or else ignobly, is very significant. From Indian Tomahawks, from Irish Shillelahs, from Arkansas Bowie-knives, up to a deliberate Norse *Holmgang*, to any civilized Wager of Battle, the distance is great.

Certain small fractions of events in this kind, which give us a direct glance into Human Existence in those days, are perhaps, in the dim scarcity of all events that are not dead and torpid, worth snatching from the general leaden haze of my erudite friend, and saving from bottomless Nox for a while.

No. I.

HOLLES OF HAUGHTON.

John Holles, Esquire, or to speak properly, Sir John Holles, of Haughton, in Notts; the same Sir John whom we saw lately made Comptroller of the Prince's Household;—an indignant man, not without some relation to us here: John Holles indignantly called it 'political simony' this selling of honours; which indeed it was: but what then? It was doable, it was done for others; it was desirable to John also, who possessed the requisite cash. He was come of London citizens, had got broad lands and manors, Haughton, Erby, and others; had wealth in abundance,—'his father used to keep a troop of players:' he now, in this epoch, for a consideration of 10,000*l.*, gets himself made Earl of Clare. We invite our readers to look back some two-score years upon his history, and notice slightly the following circumstances there.

John Holles, Esquire, of Haughton, in Notts, a youth of fortune, spirit and accomplishment, who had already seen service under the Veres, the Frobishers, by land and sea, did in 1591, in his twenty-sixth year, marry his fair neighbour Anne

Stanhope ;—Mistress Anne Stanhope, daughter of Sir Thomas Stanhope, in those parts, from whom innumerable Chesterfields, Harringtons and other Stanhopes extant to this very day descend. This fair Anne Stanhope, beautiful in her fardingales and antiquarian headgear, had been the lady of John Holles's heart in those old times ; and he married her, thinking it no harm. But the Shrewsburys, of Worksop, took offence at it. In his father's time, who kept the troop of players and did other things, John Holles had been bespoken for a daughter of the Shrewsburys ; and now here has he gone-over to the Stanhopes, enemies of the house of Shrewsbury. Ill blood in consequence ; ferment of high humours ; a Montague-and-Capulet business ; the very retainers, on both sides, biting thumbs at one another.

Pudsey, a retainer on the Shrewsbury Worksop side, bit his thumb at Orme, a retainer on the Holles Haughton side ; was called-out with drawn rapier ; was slain on the spot, like fiery Tybalt, and never bit his thumb more. Orme, poor man, was tried for murder ; but of course the Holleses and the Stanhopes could not let him be hanged ; they made interest, they feed law-counsel,—they smuggled him away to Ireland, and he could not be hanged. Whereupon Gervase Markham, a passably loose-tongued, loose-living gentleman, sworn squire-of-dames to the Dowager of Shrewsbury, took upon himself to say publicly, "That John Holles was himself privy to Pudsey's murder ; that John Holles himself, if justice were done ——!" And thereupon John Holles, at Haughton, in Notts, special date not given, presumable date 1594 or '95, indited this emphatic Note, already known to some readers :

'*For Gervase Markham.*

'Whereas you have said that I was guilty of that villany of Orme in the death of Pudsey, I affirm that you lie, and lie like a villain ; which I shall be ready to make good upon yourself, or upon any gentleman my equal living.—JOHN HOLLES.'

Gervase Markham, called upon in this emphatic way, answered, "Yes, he would fight ; certainly ;—and it should be

in Worksop Park, on such a day as would suit Holles best." Worksop Park; locked Park of the Shrewsburys! Holles, being in his sound wits, cannot consent to fight there; and Markham and the world silently insinuate, "Are you subject to niceties in your fighting, then? Readier, after all, with your tongue than with your rapier?" These new intolerabilities John Holles had to pocket as he could, to keep close in the scabbard, beside his rapier, till perhaps a day would come.

Time went on: John Holles had a son; then, in 1597, a second son, Denzil by name. Denzil Holles, Oliver Cromwell's Denzil: yes, reader, this is he; come into the world not without omens! For at his christening, Lady Stanhope, glad matron, came as grandmother and godmother; and Holles, like a dutiful son-in-law, escorted her homewards through the Forest again. Forest of merry Sherwood, where Robin Hood and others used to inhabit; that way lies their road. And now, riding so toward Shelton House, through the glades of Sherwood, whom should they chance to meet but Gervase Markham also ambling along, with some few in his company! Here, then, had the hour arrived.

With slight salutation and time of day, the two parties passed on: but Holles, with convenient celerity, took leave of his mother-in-law: "Adieu, noble Madam, it is all straight road now!" Waving a fond adieu, Holles gallops back through Sherwood glades; overtakes Markham; with brief emphasis, bids him dismount, and stand upon his guard. And so the rapiers are flashing and jingling in the Forest of Sherwood; and two men are flourishing and fencing, their intents deadly and not charitable. "Markham," cried Holles, "guard yourself better, or I shall spoil you presently;" for Markham, thrown into a flurry, fences ill; in fact, rather capers and flourishes than fences; his antagonist standing steady in his place the while, supple as an eel, alert as a serpent, and with a sting in him too. See, in few passes, our alert Holles has ended the capering of Markham; has pierced and spitted him through the lower abdominal regions, in very important quarters of the body, 'coming out at the small of the back!"

That, apparently, will do for Markham; loose-tongued, loose-living Gervase Markham lies low, having got enough. Visible to us there, in the glades of ancient Sherwood, in the depths of long-vanished years! O Dryasdust, was there not a Human Existence going-on there too; of hues other than the leaden-hazy? The fruit-trees looked all leafy, blossomy, my erudite friend, and the Life-tree Igdrasil which fills this Universe; and they had not yet rotted to brown peat! Torpid events shall be simply damnable, and continually claim oblivion from all souls; but the smallest fractions of events not torpid shall be welcome. John Holles, 'with his man, Acton,' leaving Markham in this sated condition, ride home to Haughton with questionable thoughts.

Nevertheless Markham did not die. He was carried home to Worksop, pale, hopeless; pierced in important quarters of the body: and the Earl of Shewsbury 'gathered a hundred retainers to apprehend Holles;' and contrariwise the Earl of Sheffield came to Haughton with fifty retainers to protect Holles;—and in the mean while Markham began to show symptoms of recovering, and the retainers dispersed themselves again. The doctor declared that Markham would live; but that,—but that —— Here, we will suppose, the Doctor tragi-comically shook his head, pleading the imperfections of language! Markham did live along after; breaking several of the commandments, but keeping one of them it is charitably believed. For the rest, having 'vowed never to eat supper nor to take the sacrament' till he was revenged on Holles, he did not enjoy either of those consolations in this world.[1]

Such doings went forward in Sherwood Forest and in our English Life-arena elsewhere; the trees being as yet all green and leafy.

[1] The above facts are given in Gervase Holles's Manuscript *Memoirs of the Family of Holles* (in *Biographia Britannica*, § Holles); a Manuscript which some of our Dryasdust Societies ought to print.

No. II.

CROYDON RACES.

Sardanapalus Hay, and other Scotch favourites of King James, have transiently gleaned athwart us; their number is in excess, not in defect. These hungry magnificent individuals, of whom Sardanapalus Hay is one, and supreme Car another, are an eye-sorrow to English subjects; and sour looks, bitter gibes, followed by duels within and without the verge, keep his Majesty's pacificatory hand in use. How many duels has he soldered-up, with difficulty: for the English are of a grim humour when soured; and the Scotch too are fierce and proud; and it is a truculent swashbuckler age, ready with its stroke, in whatever else it may be wanting.

Scotch Maxwell, James Maxwell, Usher of the Black or some kind of Rod, did he not, in his insolent sardonic way, of which he is capable, take a certain young tastefully dizened English gentleman by the bandstring, nay perhaps by the earring and its appendage, by some black ribbon in or about the ear; and so, by the ribbon, *lead* him out from the Royal Presence,—as if he had been a nondescript in Natural History; some tame rabbit, of unusual size and aspect, with ribbon in its ear! Such touches of sardonic humour please me little. The Four Inns of Court were in deadly emotion; and fashionable Young England in general demanded satisfaction, with a growl that was tremendous enough. Sardonic Maxwell had to apologize in the completest manner,—and be more wary in future how he led-out fashionable young gentlemen.

"*Beati pacifici*, Happy are the peacemakers," said his Majesty always. Good Majesty; shining examples of justice too he is prepared to afford; and has a snarl in him which can occasionally bite. Of Crichton Lord Sanquhar, from the pleasant valley of Nith,—how the Fencing-master accidentally pricked an eye out of him, and he forgave it; how, much wrought-upon afterwards, he was at last induced to have the Fencing-master assassinated;—and to have himself executed

in Palace Yard in consequence, and his two assassin servants hanged in Fleet Street; rough Border serving-men of all work, too unregardful of the gallows: of this unadmirable Crichton the whole world heard, not without pity, and can still hear.

This of Croydon Races, too, if we read old *Osborne* with reflection, will become significant of many things. How the races were going on, a new delightful invention of that age; and Croydon Heath was populous with multitudes come to see; and between James Ramsay of the Dalhousie Ramsays, and Philip Herbert of the Montgomery Herberts, there rose sudden strife; sharp passages of wit,—ending in a sharp stroke of Ramsay's switch over the crown and face of my Lord Montgomery, the great Earl of Pembroke's brother, and himself capable to be Earl Pembroke! It is a fact of the most astonishing description: undeniable,—though the exact date and circumstances will now never be discovered in this world. It is all vague as cloud, in old *Osborne;* lies off or on, within sight of Prince Henry's Pageant; exact date of it never to be known. Yet is it well recognisable as distant ill-defined *land*, and no cloud; not dream but astonishing fact. Can the reader sufficiently admire at it? The honourable Philip Herbert, of the best blood of England, here is he switched over the crown by an accursed Scotch Ramsay! We hear the swift-stinging descent of the ignominious horse-switch; we see the swift-blazing countenances of gods and men.

Instantaneous shriek, as was inevitable, rises near and far: The Scotch insolence, Scotch pride and hunger, Scotch damnability! And 'a cripple man, with only the use of three fingers,' crooked of shape, hot of temper, rode about the field with drawn dagger; urging in a shrill manner, that we should prick every Scotch lown of them home to their own beggarly country again, or to the Devil,—off Croydon Heath, at least. The name of this shrill individual, with dagger grasped between two fingers and a thumb, was 'John Pinchback' or Pinchbeck; and appears here in History, with something like golden lustre, for one moment and no more. "Let us break-

[1] State Trials.

fast on them at Croydon," cries Pinchbeck, in a shrill, inspired manner; "and sup on them at London!" The hour was really ominous. But Philip Herbert, beautiful young man, himself of infirm temper and given to strokes, stood firmly dissuasive: he is in the King's service, how shall he answer it; he was himself to blame withal. And young Edward Sackville is, with his young friend Bruce of Kinloss, firmly dissuasive; it is the Bruce whom we saw at the chapel-door, stepping-out a new-made knight, now here with Sackville; dear friends these, not always to be friends! But for the present they are firmly dissuasive; all considerate persons are dissuasive. Pinchbeck's dagger brandishes itself in vain.

Sits the wind so, O Pinchbeck? Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother: this is her son, and he stands a switch?—Yes, my shrill crookbacked friend, to avoid huge riot and calamity, he does so: and I see a massive nobleness in the man, which thou, egregious cock of bantam, wilt never in this world comprehend, but only crow over in thy shrill way. Ramsay and the Scots, and all persons, rode home unharmed that night; and my shrill friend gradually composed himself again. Philip Herbert may expect knighthoods, lordhoods, court-promotions: neither did his heroic mother 'tear her hair,' I think, to any great extent,—except in the imaginations of Osborne, Pinchbeck and such like.

This was the scene of Croydon Races; a fact, and significant of many facts, that hangs-out for us like a cloud-island, and is not cloud.[1]

No. III.

SIR THOMAS DUTTON AND SIR HATTON CHEEK.

His Majesty, as I perceive in spite of calumnies, was not a 'coward;' see how he behaved in the Gowrie Conspiracy and elsewhere. But he knew the value, to all persons, and to all

[1] Francis Osborne's *Traditional Memorials on the Reign of James the First* (Reprinted in Sir Walter Scott's History of the Court of James I. Edinburgh, 1811), pp. 220–227.

interests of persons, of a whole skin ; how unthrifty everywhere is any solution of continuity, if it can be avoided ! He struggled to preside pacifically over an age of some ferocity much given to wrangling. Peace here, if possible ; skins were not made for mere slitting and slashing ! You that are for war, cannot you go abroad, and fight the Papist Spaniards ? Over in the Netherlands there is always fighting enough. You that are of ruffling humour, gather your truculent ruffians together ; make yourself colonels over them ; go to the Netherlands, and fight your bellyful !

Which accordingly many do, earning deathless war-laurels for the moment ; and have done, and will continue doing, in those generations. Our gallant Veres, Earl of Oxford and the others, it has long been their way : gallant Cecil, to be called Earl of Wimbledon ; gallant Sir John Burroughs, gallant Sir Hatton Cheek,—it is still their way. Deathless military renowns are gathered there in this manner ; deathless for the moment. Did not Ben Jonson, in his young hard days, bear arms very manfully as a private soldado there ? Ben, who now writes learned plays and court-masks as Poet Laureate, served manfully with pike and sword there for his groat a day with rations. And once when a Spanish soldier came strutting forward between the lines,—flourishing his weapon, and defying all persons in general,—Ben stept forth, as I hear ;[1] fenced that braggart Spaniard, since no other would do it ; and ended by soon slitting him in two, and so silencing him ! Ben's war-tuck, to judge by the flourish of his pen, must have had a very dangerous stroke in it.

'Swashbuckler age,' we said ; but the expression was incorrect, except as a figure. Bucklers went out, fifty years ago, 'about the twentieth of Queen Elizabeth ;' men do not now swash with them, or fight in that way. Iron armour has mostly gone out, except in mere pictures of soldiers : King James said, It was an excellent invention ; you could get no harm in it, and neither could you do any. Bucklers, either for

[1] Life of Ben Jonson.

horse or foot, are quite gone. Yet old Mr. Stowe, good chronicler, can recollect when every gentleman had his buckler : and at length every serving-man and City dandy. Smithfield,—still a waste field, full of puddles in wet weather,—was in those days full of buckler-duels, every Sunday and holiday in the dry season ; and was called Ruffian's Rig, or some such name.

A man, in those days, bought his buckler, of gilt leather and wood, at the haberdasher's ; 'hung it over his back, by a strap fastened to the pommel of his sword in front.' Elegant men showed what taste, or sense of poetic beauty, was in them, by the fashion of their buckler. With Spanish beaver, with starched ruff, and elegant Spanish cloak, with elegant buckler hanging at his back, a man, if his moustachios and boots were in good order, stepped forth with some satisfaction. Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard ; a decidedly truculent-looking figure. Jostle him in the street thoroughfares, accidentally splash his boots as you pass,—by Heaven, the buckler gets upon his arm, the sword flashes in his fist, with oaths enough ; and you too being ready, there is a noise ! Clink, clank, death and fury ; all persons gathering round, and new quarrels springing from this one ! And Dogberry comes up with the town-guard ? And the shopkeepers hastily close their shops ? Nay, it is hardly necessary, says Mr. Howe : these buckler-fights amount only to noise, for most part ; the jingle of iron against tin and painted leather. Ruffling swashers strutting along, with big oaths and whiskers, delight to pick a quarrel ; but the rule is, you do not thrust, you do not strike below the waist ; and it was oftenest a dry duel—mere noise, as of working tinsmiths, with profane swearing ! Empty vapouring bully-rooks and braggarts, they encumber the thoroughfares mainly. Dogberry and Verges ought to apprehend them. I have seen, in Smithfield on a dry holiday, 'thirty of them on a side,' fighting and hammering as if for life ; and was not at the pains [1] to look at them, the blockheads ; their noise as the mere beating of old kettles to me !

[1] Stowe's Chronicle, and Howe's Continuation, 1024, &c.

The truth is, serving-men themselves, and City apprentices had got bucklers; and the duels, no death following, ceased to be sublime. About fifty years ago, serious men took to fighting with rapiers, and the buckler fell away. Holles in Sherwood, as we saw, fought with rapier, and he soon spoiled Markham. Rapier and dagger especially; that is a more silent duel, but a terribly serious one! Perhaps the reader will like to take a view of one such serious duel in those days, and therewith close this desultory chapter.

It was at the siege of Juliers, in the Netherlands wars, of the year 1610;[1] we give the date, for wars are perpetual, or nearly so, in the Netherlands. At one of the storm-parties of the siege of Juliers, the gallant Sir Hatton Cheek, above alluded to, a superior officer of the English force which fights there under my Lord Cecil, that shall be Wimbledon; the gallant Sir Hatton, I say, being of hot temper, superior officer, and the service a storm-party on some bastion or demilune, speaks sharp word of command to Sir Thomas Dutton, the officer under him, who also is probably of hot temper in this hot moment. Sharp word of command to Dutton; and the movement not proceeding rightly, sharp word of rebuke. To which Dutton, with kindled voice, answers something sharp; is answered still more sharply with voice high-flaming;—whereat Dutton suddenly holds-in; says merely, "He is under military duty here, but perhaps will not always be so;" and rushing forward, does his order silently, the best he can. His

[1] Siege began in the latter end of July 1610; ended victoriously, 4th September following: principal assaults were, 10th August and 14th August; in one of which this affair of ours must have taken rise. Siege commanded by Christian of Anhalt, a famed Protestant Captain of those times. Henri IV. of France was assassinated while setting-out for this siege; Prince Maurice of Nassau was there; 'Dutch troops, French, English and German' (Brandenburgers and Pfalz-Neuburgers chiefly, *versus* Kaiser Rodolf II. and his unjust seizure of the Town) 'fought with the greatest unity.' Prelude to the Thirty-Years War, and one of the principal sources of it, this Controversy about Juliers. (Carl Friedrich Pauli: *Allgemeine Preussische Staats-Geschichte*, 4to, Halle, 1762, iii. 502, 527.)

order done, Dutton straightway lays down his commission; packs up, that night, and returns to England.

Sir Hatton Cheek prosecutes his work at the siege of Juliers; gallantly assists at the taking of Juliers, triumphant over all the bastions and half-moons there; but hears withal that Dutton is, at home in England, defaming him as a choleric tyrant and so forth. Dreadful news; which brings some biliary attack on the gallant man, and reduces him to a bed of sickness. Hardly recovered, he despatches message to Dutton, That he will request to have the pleasure of his company, with arms and seconds ready, on some neutral ground, —Calais sands for instance,—at an early day, if convenient. Convenient; yes, as dinner to the hungry! answers Dutton; and time, place and circumstances are rapidly enough agreed upon.

And so, on Calais sands, in a winter morning of the year 1610, this is what we see, most authentically, through the lapse of dim Time. Two gentlemen stript to the shirt and waistband; in the two hands of each a rapier and dagger clutched; their looks sufficiently serious! The seconds, having stript, equipt, and fairly overhauled and certified them, are just about retiring from the measured fate-circle, not without indignation that *they* are forbidden to fight. Two gentlemen in this alarming posture; of whom the Universe knows, has known, and will know nothing, except that they were of choleric humour, and assisted in the Netherlands wars! They are evidently English human creatures, in the height of silent fury, and measured circuit of fate; whom we here audibly name once more, Sir Hatton Cheek, Sir Thomas Dutton, knights both, soldadoes both. Ill-fated English human creatures, what horrible confusion of the Pit is this?

Dutton, though in suppressed rage, the seconds about to withdraw, will explain some things if a word were granted. "No words," says the other; "stand on your guard!" brandishing his rapier, grasping harder his dagger. Dutton, now silent too, is on his guard. Good Heavens: after some brief flourishing and flashing,—the gleam of the swift clear steel playing madly in one's eyes,—they, at the first pass, plunge

home on one another ; home, with beak and claws ; home to the very heart ! Cheek's rapier is through Dutton's throat from before, and his dagger is through it from behind,—the windpipe miraculously missed ; and, in the same instant, Dutton's rapier is through Cheek's body from before, his dagger through his back from behind,—lungs and life *not* missed ; and the seconds have to advance, 'pull out the four bloody weapons,' disengage that hell-embrace of theirs. This is serious enough ! Cheek reels, his life fast flowing ; but still rushes rapid on Dutton, who merely parries, skips ; till Cheek reels down, dead in his rage. "He had a bloody burial there that morning," says my ancient friend.[1] He will assist no more in the Netherlands or other wars.

Such scenes does History disclose, as in sunbeams, as in blazing hell-fire, on Calais sands, in the raw winter morning ; then drops the blanket of centuries, of everlasting Night, over it, and passes on elsewhither. Gallant Sir Hatton Cheek lies buried there, and Cecil of Wimbledon, son of Burleigh, will have to seek another superior officer. What became of the living Dutton afterwards, I have never to this moment had the least hint.

[1] Wilson (in Kennet), ii. 684.

THE OPERA.

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THE OPERA.

Music the speech of Angels; raising and admitting the soul to the Council of the Universe. It was so in old earnest times, whatever it may have come to be with us. The waste that is made in music among the saddest of all our squanderings of God's gifts. David's inspired Psalms; and the things men are inspired to sing now at the Opera. (p. 115).—The Haymarket Opera, with its lustres, painting, upholstery: Artists, too, got together from the ends of the world; capable of far other work than squalling here. The very ballet-girls, with their muslin saucers and mad ugly caperings, little short of miraculous. And to think of some Rossini or Bellini in the rear of it! (117).—All this to afford an hour's dreary amusement to a high-dizened select populace—not worth amusing. The Rhythmic Arts, with their magical accessories, a mere accompaniment; the real service of the evening Paphian rather. Wonderful to see, and sad if we had eyes, what the Modern Aristocracy of men can deliberately do! A world all calculated for strangling of heroisms; and the ages have altered strangely: They will alter yet again. (118).

THE OPERA.[1]

["DEAR P.,—Not having anything of my own which I could contribute (as is my wish and duty) to this pious Adventure of yours, and not being able in these busy days to get anything ready, I decide to offer you a bit of an Excerpt from that singular *Conspectus of England*, lately written, not yet printed, by Professor Ezechiel Peasemeal, a distinguished American friend of mine. Dr. Peasemeal will excuse my printing it here. His *Conspectus*, a work of some extent, has already been crowned by the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Buncombe, which includes, as you know, the chief thinkers of the New World; and it will probably be printed entire in their 'Transactions' one day. Meanwhile let your readers have the first taste of it; and much good may it do them and you!"—T. C.]

MUSIC is well said to be the speech of angels; in fact, nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine. It brings us near to the Infinite; we look for moments, across the cloudy elements, into the eternal Sea of Light, when song leads and inspires us. Serious nations, all nations that can still listen to the mandate of Nature, have prized song and music as the highest; as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy, and for whatsoever in them was divine. Their singer was a *vates*, admitted to the council of the universe, friend of the gods, and choicest benefactor to man.

Reader, it was actually so in Greek, in Roman, in Moslem, Christian, most of all in Old-Hebrew times: and if you look how it now is, you will find a change that should astonish you. Good Heavens, from a Psalm of Asaph to a seat at the

[1] KEEPSAKE for 1852.—The 'dear P.' there, I recollect, was my old friend Proctor (Barry Cornwall); and his 'pious Adventure' had reference to that same Publication, under touching human circumstances which had lately arisen.

London Opera in the Haymarket, what a road have men travelled! The waste that is made in music is probably among the saddest of all our squanderings of God's gifts. Music has, for a long time past, been avowedly mad, divorced from sense and the reality of things; and runs about now as an open Bedlamite, for a good many generations back, bragging that she has nothing to do with sense and reality, but with fiction and delirium only; and stares with unaffected amazement, not able to suppress an elegant burst of witty laughter, at my suggesting the old fact to her.

Fact nevertheless it is, forgotten, and fallen ridiculous as it may be. Tyrtæus, who had a little music, did not sing Barbers of Seville, but the need of beating back one's country's enemies; a most *true* song, to which the hearts of men did burst responsive into fiery melody, followed by fiery strokes before long. Sophocles also sang, and showed in grand dramatic rhythm and melody, not a fable but a fact, the best he could interpret it; the judgments of Eternal Destiny upon the erring sons of men. Æschylus, Sophocles, all noble poets were priests as well; and sang the *truest* (which was also the divinest) they had been privileged to discover here below. To 'sing the praise of God,' that, you will find, if you can interpret old words, and see what new things they mean, was always, and will always be, the business of the singer. He who forsakes that business, and, wasting our divinest gifts, sings the praise of Chaos, what shall we say of him!

David, king of Judah, a soul inspired by divine music and much other heroism, was wont to pour himself in song; he, with seer's eye and heart, discerned the Godlike amid the Human; struck tones that were an echo of the sphere-harmonies, and are still felt to be such. Reader, art thou one of a thousand, able still to *read* a Psalm of David, and catch some echo of it through the old dim centuries; feeling far off, in thy own heart, what it once was to other hearts made as thine? To sing it attempt not, for it is impossible in this late time; only know that it once was sung. Then go to the Opera, and hear, with unspeakable reflections, what things men now sing! * * *

Of the Haymarket Opera my account, in fine, is this: Lustres, candelabras, painting, gilding at discretion; a hall as of the Caliph Alraschid, or him that commanded the slaves of the Lamp; a hall as if fitted-up by the genii, regardless of expense. Upholstery, and the outlay of human capital, could do no more. Artists, too, as they are called, have been got together from the ends of the world, regardless likewise of expense, to do dancing and singing, some of them even geniuses in their craft. One singer in particular, called Coletti or some such name, seemed to me, by the cast of his face, by the tones of his voice, by his general bearing, so far as I could read it, to be a man of deep and ardent sensibilities, of delicate intuitions, just sympathies; originally an almost poetic soul, or man of *genius*, as we term it; stamped by Nature as capable of far other work than squalling here, like a blind Samson, to make the Philistines sport!

Nay, all of them had aptitudes, perhaps of a distinguished kind; and must, by their own and other people's labour, have got a training equal or superior in toilsomeness, earnest assiduity, and patient travail, to what breeds men to the most arduous trades. I speak not of kings, grandees, or the like show-figures; but few soldiers, judges, men of letters, can have had such pains taken with them. The very ballet-girls, with their muslin saucers round them, were perhaps little short of miraculous; whirling and spinning there in strange mad vortexes, and then suddenly fixing themselves motionless, each upon her left or right great toe, with the other leg stretched out at an angle of ninety degrees,—as if you had suddenly pricked into the floor, by one of their points, a pair, or rather a multitudious cohort, of mad restlessly jumping and clipping scissors, and so bidden them rest, with opened blades, and stand still, in the Devil's name! A truly notable motion; marvellous, almost miraculous, were not the people there so used to it. Motion peculiar to the Opera; perhaps the ugliest, and surely one of the most difficult, ever taught a female creature in this world. Nature abhors it; but Art does at least admit it to border on the impossible. One little Cerito, or Taglioni the Second, that night when I was there, went

bounding from the floor as if she had been made of Indian-rubber, or filled with hydrogen gas, and inclined by positive levity to bolt through the ceiling; perhaps neither Semiramis nor Catherine the Second had bred herself so carefully.

Such talent, and such martydom of training, gathered from the four winds, was now here, to do its feat and be paid for it. Regardless of expense, indeed! The purse of Fortunatus seemed to have opened itself, and the divine art of Musical Sound and Rhythmic Motion was welcomed with an explosion of all the magnificences which the other arts, fine and coarse, could achieve. For you are to think of some Rossini or Bellini in the rear of it, too: to say nothing of the Stanfields, and hosts of scene-painters, machinists, engineers, enterprisers;—fit to have taken Gibraltar, written the History of England, or reduced Ireland into Industrial Regiments, had they so set their minds to it!

Alas, and of all these notable or noticeable human talents, and excellent perseverances and energies, backed by mountains of wealth, and led by the divine art of Music and Rhythm vouchsafed by Heaven to them and us, what was to be the issue here this evening? An hour's amusement, not amusing either, but wearisome and dreary, to a high-dizened select populace of male and female persons, who seemed to me not much worth amusing! Could any one have pealed into their hearts once, one true thought, and glimpse of Self-vision: "High-dizened, most expensive persons, Aristocracy so-called, or *Best* of the World, beware, beware what proofs you are giving here of betterness and bestness!" And then the salutary pang of conscience in reply: "A select populace, with money in its purse, and drilled a little by the posture-master: good Heavens! if that were what, here and everywhere in God's Creation, I *am?* And a world all dying because I am, and show myself to be, and to have long been, even that? John, the carriage, the carriage; swift! Let me go home in silence, to reflection, perhaps to sackcloth and ashes!" This, and not amusement, would have profited those high-dizened persons.

Amusement, at any rate, they did not get from Euterpe

and Melpomene. These two Muses, sent-for regardless of expense, I could see, were but the vehicle of a kind of service which I judged to be Paphian rather. Young beauties of both sexes used their opera-glasses, you could notice, not entirely for looking at the stage. And, it must be owned, the light, in this explosion of all the upholsteries, and the human fine arts and coarse, was magical; and made your fair one an Armida,—if you liked her better so. Nay, certain old Improper-Females (of quality), in their rouge and jewels, even these looked some *reminiscence* of enchantment; and I saw this and the other lean domestic Dandy, with icy smile on his old worn face; this and the other Marquis Chatabagues, Prince Mahogany, or the like foreign Dignitary, tripping into the boxes of said females, grinning there awhile, with dyed moustachios and macassar-oil graciosity, and then tripping out again;—and, in fact, I perceived that Coletti and Cerito and the Rhythmic Arts were a mere accompaniment here.

Wonderful to see; and sad, if you had eyes! Do but think of it. Cleopatra threw pearls into her drink, in mere waste; which was reckoned foolish of her. But here had the Modern Aristocracy of men brought the divinest of its Arts, heavenly Music itself; and, piling all the upholsteries and ingenuities that other human art could do, had lighted them into a bonfire to illuminate an hour's flirtation of Chatabagues, Mahogany, and these improper persons! Never in Nature had I seen such waste before. O Coletti, you whose inborn melody, once of kindred, as I judged, to 'the Melodies Eternal,' might have valiantly weeded-out this and the other false thing from the ways of men, and made a bit of God's Creation more melodious,—they have purchased you away from that; chained you to the wheel of Prince Mahogany's chariot, and here you make sport for a macassar Chatabagues and his improper-females past the prime of life! Wretched spiritual Nigger, oh, if you *had* some genius, and were not a born Nigger with mere appetite for pumpkin, should you have endured such a lot? I lament for you beyond all other expenses. Other expenses are light; you are the Cleopatra's pearl that should not have been flung into Mahogany's claret-

cup. And Rossini, too, and Mozart and Bellini—— Oh, Heavens! when I think that Music too is condemned to be mad, and to burn herself, to this end, on such a funeral pile,—your celestial Opera-house grows dark and infernal to me! Behind its glitter stalks the shadow of Eternal Death; through it too, I look not 'up into the divine eye,' as Richter has it, 'but down into the bottomless eye-socket'—not up towards God, Heaven, and the Throne of Truth, but too truly down towards Falsity, Vacuity, and the dwelling-place of Everlasting Despair. * * *

Good sirs, surely I by no means expect the Opera will abolish itself this year or the next. But if you ask me, Why heroes are not born now, why heroisms are not done now? I will answer you: It is a world all calculated for strangling of heroisms. At every ingress into life, the genius of the world lies in wait for heroisms, and by seduction or compulsion unweariedly does its utmost to pervert them or extinguish them. Yes; to its Hells of sweating tailors, distressed needlewomen and the like, this Opera of yours is the appropriate Heaven! Of a truth, if you will read a Psalm of Asaph till you understand it, and then come hither and hear the Rossini-and-Coletti Psalm, you will find the ages have altered a good deal. * * *

Nor do I wish all men to become Psalmist Asaphs and fanatic Hebrews. Far other is my wish; far other, and wider, is now my notion of this Universe. Populations of stern faces, stern as any Hebrew, but capable withal of bursting into inextinguishable laughter on occasion:—do you understand that new and better form of character? Laughter also, if it come from the heart, is a heavenly thing. But, at least and lowest, I would have you a Population abhorring phantasms; —abhorring *unveracity* in all things; and in your "amusements," which are voluntary and not compulsory things, abhorring it most impatiently of all. * * *

PROJECT OF A NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF SCOTTISH PORTRAITS.

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PROJECT OF A NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF SCOTTISH PORTRAITS.

HISTORICAL interest in good Historical Portraits. *Any* representation by a faithful human creature of a Face and Figure worth knowing, which *he* saw, which we can *never* see, is invaluable. (p. 123).—All this apart from the artistic value of the Portraits. Historical Portrait-Galleries might far transcend in worth all other kinds of National Collections of Pictures whatsoever. In selecting Portraits the grand question, What would the best-informed and most ingenuous soul like most to see, for illuminating and verifying History to himself? At the end of the account, to have served him, will be to have served everybody. The thing can by no means be done by *Yankee-Barnum* methods; nor should it, if it could. (124).—No portrait of any living man admitted, however 'Historical' it promised to be; The space of a generation required, to discriminate between popular monstrosities and Historical realities. Engravings, coins, casts; any genuine help to conceive the actual likeness of the man, should be welcome. No modern pictures of historical events: Infatuated blotches of insincere ignorance: Wilkie's *John Knox; Battle of Worcester*, by some famed Academician or other. All that kind of matter, as indisputable 'chaff,' to be severely purged away. Considerations respecting a plurality of portraits of the same person. The question, Who is a Historical Character? The Catalogue, if well done, one of the best parts of the whole concern. (128).

PROJECT OF A NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF SCOTTISH PORTRAITS.[1]

[1854.]

To DAVID LAING, *Esquire*, (*Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*,) *Signet Library, Edinburgh.*

MY DEAR SIR, Chelsea, 3d May 1854.

With regard to that *General Exhibition of Scottish Historical Portraits*, it is certain there are many people more qualified to speak than I. In fact, it has never been with me more than an aspiration; an ardent wish, rather without much hope: to make it into an executable project, there are needed far other capacities and opportunities than mine. However, you shall at once hear what my crude notions on the subject are or have been, since you wish it.

First of all, then, I have to tell you, as a fact of personal experience, that in all my poor Historical investigations it has been, and always is, one of the most primary wants to procure a bodily likeness of the personage inquired after; a good *Portrait* if such exists; failing that, even an indifferent if sincere one. In short, *any* representation, made by a faithful human creature, of that Face and Figure, which *he* saw with his eyes, and which I can never see with mine, is now valuable to me, and much better than none at all. This, which is my own deep experience, I believe to be, in a deeper or less deep degree, the universal one; and that every student and reader of History, who strives earnestly to conceive

[1] Printed in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. i. Part 3 (4to, Edinburgh, 1855).

for himself what manner of Fact and *Man* this or the other vague Historical *Name* can have been, will, as the first and directest indication of all, search eagerly for a Portrait, for all the reasonable Portraits there are; and never rest till he have made out, if possible, what the man's natural face was like. Often I have found a Portrait superior in real instruction to half-a-dozen written 'Biographies,' as Biographies are written;—or, rather, let me say, I have found that the Portrait was as a small lighted *candle* by which the Biographies could for the first time be *read*, and some human interpretation be made of them; the *Biographied* Personage no longer an empty impossible Phantasm, or distracting Aggregate of inconsistent rumours—(in which state, alas his usual one, he is *worth* nothing to anybody, except it be as a dried thistle for Pedants to thrash, and for men to fly out of the way of),—but yielding at last some features which one could admit to be human. Next in directness are a man's genuine Letters, if he have left any, and you can get to *read* them to the bottom: of course, a man's *actions* are the most complete and indubitable stamp of him; but without these aids, of Portraits and Letters, they are in themselves so infinitely abstruse a stamp, and so confused by foreign rumour and false tradition of them, as to be oftenest undecipherable with certainty.

This kind of value and interest I may take as the highest pitch of interest there is in Historical Portraits; this, which the zealous and studious Historian feels in them: and one may say, all men, just in proportion as they are '*Historians*' (which every mortal is, who has a *memory*, and attachments and possessions in the Past), will feel something of the same, —every human creature, something. So that I suppose there is absolutely nobody so dark and dull, and everyway sunk and stupefied, that a Series of Historical Portraits, especially of his native country, would not be of real interest to him;—*real* I mean, as coming from himself and his own heart, not *imaginary*, and preached-in upon him by the Newspapers; which is an important distinction.

And all this is quite apart from the *artistic* value of the Portraits (which also is a real value, of its sort, especially

for some classes, however exaggerated it may sometimes be): all this is a quantity to be *added* to the artistic value, whatever it may be; and appeals to a far deeper and more universal principle in human nature than the love of Pictures is. Of which principle some dimmer or clearer form may be seen continually active wherever men are;—in your Antiquarian Museum, for example, may be seen, giving very conspicuous proofs of itself, sanctioned more or less by all the world! If one would buy an indisputably authentic *old shoe* of William Wallace for hundreds of pounds, and run to look at it from all ends of Scotland, what would one give for an authentic visible shadow of his face, could such, by art natural or art magic, now be had!

It has always struck me that Historical Portrait-Galleries far transcend in worth all other kinds of National Collections of Pictures whatever; that in fact they ought to exist (for many reasons, of all degrees of weight) in every country, as among the most popular and cherished National Possessions:—and it is not a joyful reflection, but an extremely mournful one, that in no country is there at present such a thing to be found. What Louis Philippe may have collected, in the way of French Historical Portrait, at Versailles, I did not see: if worth much (which I hear it is not), it might have proved the best memorial left by him, one day. Chancellor Clarendon made a brave attempt in that kind for England; but his House and 'Gallery' fell all asunder, in a sad way; and as yet there has been no second attempt that I can hear of. As matters stand, Historical Portraits abound in England; but where they are, or where any individual of them is, no man knows, or can discover except by groping and hunting (*underground*, as it were, and like the mole!) in an almost desperate manner; even among the intelligent and learned of your acquaintance, you inquire to no purpose. Nor is the English National Gallery poorer in this respect than others,—perhaps even much the reverse. The sad rule holds in all countries. In the Dresden Gallery, for instance, you find Flayings of Bartholomew, Flayings of Marsyas, Rapes of the Sabines: but if you ask for a Portrait of Martin Luther, of

Friedrich the Wise, nay even of August the Big, of Marshal Saxe or poor Count Brühl, you will find no satisfactory answer. In Berlin itself, which affects to be a wiser city, I found, not long ago, Picture-Galleries not a few, with ancient and modern *virtù* in abundance and superabundance,—whole acres of mythological smearing (Tower of Babel, and I know not what), by Kaulbach and others, still going on: but a *genuine Portrait of Frederic the Great* was a thing I could nowhere hear of. That is strange, but that is true. I roamed through endless lines of Pictures; inquired far and wide, even Sculptor Rauch could tell me nothing: at last it was chiefly by good luck that the thing I was in quest of turned up.—This I find to be one of the saddest of those few defects in the world which are easily capable of remedy: I hope you in Scotland, in the 'new National Museum' we hear talk of, will have a good eye to this, and remedy it in your own case! Scotland at present is not worse than other countries in the point in question: but neither is it at all better; and as Scotland, unlike some other countries, *has* a History of a very readable nature, and has never published even an *engraved* series of National Portraits, perhaps the evil is more sensible and patent there than elsewhere. It is an evil which should be everywhere remedied: and if Scotland be the first to set an example in that respect, Scotland will do honourably by herself, and achieve a benefit to all the world.

From this long Prologue, if you have patience to consider it over, you will see sufficiently what my notion of the main rules for executing the Project would be. The grand interest to be held in view is that which I have defined as the *Historian's*, the ingenuous sincere *Student of History's*. Ingenuous and sincere student; not *pedantic*, fantastic and imaginary! It seems to me all *real* interest for the other classes of mankind, down to the most ignorant class, may well be considered as only a more and more diluted form of that interest. The rule therefore is, Walk straight towards that; not refusing to look to the right and left, but keeping your face steadily on that: if you can manage to secure that *well*, all else will fol-

low from it, or attend it. Ask always, What would the best-informed and most ingenuous Scottish soul like most to see, for illuminating and verifying of Scottish History to himself? This is what it concerns us to try if we can get for him and for the world ;—and, on the whole, this only ; for it is certain, all other men will by and by follow this best-informed and most ingenuous one ; and at the end of the account, if you have served him well, you will turn-out to have served everybody well.

Great zeal, great industry will of course be needed in hunting-up what Portraits there are, scattered wide over country mansions in all parts of Scotland ;—in gathering-in your raw-material, so to speak. Next, not less, but even more important, will be skill,—knowledge, judgment, and above all, fidelity,—in selecting, exhibiting and elucidating these. That indeed, I reckon, will be the vitallest condition of all ; the cardinal point, on which success or failure will turn. You will need the best Pictorial judgment (some faithful critic who really *knows* the Schools and Epochs of Art a little, and can help towards the solution of so many things that will depend on that) ; especially all the *Historical* knowledge and good sense that can be combined upon the business will be indispensable ! For the rest, I would sedulously avoid all concern with the vulgar Showman or Charlatan line of action in this matter. For though the thing must depend, a good deal at least, on popular support, the real way to get that (especially in such a matter) is, to deserve it : the thing can by no means be done by *Yankee-Barnum* methods ; nor should it, if it could. —In a word, here as everywhere, to winnow-out the chaff of the business, and present in a clear and pure state what of *wheat* (little or much) may be in it ; on this, as I compute, the Project will stand or fall. If faithfully executed,—the chaff actually well suppressed, the wheat honestly given,—I cannot doubt but it might succeed. Let it but promise to deserve success, I suppose honourable help might be got for it among the wealthier and wiser classes of Scotchmen.

But to come now to your more specific questions, I should be inclined, on the above principles, to judge :

1°. That no living Scotchman's portrait should be admitted, however 'Historical' it promised to be. And I would farther counsel that you should be extremely chary about such 'Historical men' as have died within the last twenty-five or thirty years; it requires always the space of a generation to discriminate between popular monstrosities and Historical realities in the matter of Men,—to let mere dust-clouds settle into their natural place and bulk. But from that point, especially from the beginning of this century, you have free scope, and ever freer, backwards to the very beginning of things,—which, alas, in the Pictorial respect, I fear will only be some two or three centuries, or little more! The oldest Scottish portrait I can recollect to have seen, of any worth, is that of James IV. (and only as an engraving, the original at Taymouth), though probably enough you may know of older. But for the earlier figures,—I would go back to Colm and Adamnan,—if I *could*, by any old illuminated missal or otherwise? You will have engravings, coins, casts of sepulchral monuments—I have seen Bruce's *skull*, at least, cast in plaster!—and remember always that any genuine help to conceive the actual likeness of the man will be welcome, in these as indeed in all cases. The one question is, that they be genuine (or, if not, well marked as *doubtful*, and in what degree doubtful); that they *be* 'helps,' instead of *hindrances* and criminal misguidances!

2°. In regard to modern pictures representing historical events, my vote would clearly be, To make the rule absolute *not* to admit any one of these; at least not till I saw one that was *other* than an infatuated blotch of insincere ignorance, and a mere distress to an earnest and well-instructed eye! Since the time of *Hollar*, there is not the least *veracity*, even of intention, in such things; and, for most part, there is an *ignorance* altogether abject. *Wilkie's John Knox*, for example: no picture that I ever saw by a man of genius can well be, in regard to all earnest purposes, a more perfect failure! Can anything, in fact, be more entirely *useless* for earnest purposes, more *un*like what ever could have been the reality, than that gross Energumen, more like a boxing-butcher, whom he

has set into a pulpit surrounded with draperies, with fat-shouldered women, and play-actor men in mail, and labelled Knox? I know the picture only by engravings, always hasten-on when I see it in a window, and would not for much have it hung on the wall beside me! So, too, I have often seen a *Battle of Worcester*, by some famed Academician or other, which consists of an angry man and horse (man presumably intended for Cromwell, but not like him),—man, with heavy flapping Spanish cloak, &c., and no hat to his head, firing a pistol over his shoulder into what seems a dreadful shower of rain in the distance! What can be the use of such things, except to persons who have turned their back on real interests, and gone wool-gathering in search of imaginary? All that kind of matter, as indisputable 'chaff,' ought to be severely purged away.

3°. With respect to *plurality* of portraits, when you have the offer of more than one? The answer to that, on the principles already stated, will come-out different in different cases, and be an affair of consideration and compromise. For the earlier (and more uncertain) figures, I should incline to admit *all* that could be got; certainly all that could be found genuine, that were 'helps,' as above said. Nay, such even as were only half-genuine, if there were no others; marking well their doubtful character. As you come lower down, the selection will be stricter; and in quite modern times when pictures are plentiful, I should think *one* portrait would in general be the rule. But of course respect must be had to the importance of the man, the *excellence* of the portraits offered (or their peculiar worth for your objects), the quantity of house-room you are like to have, &c. &c.; and the decision will be the summary and adjustment of all these considerations.

For example, during the *Reformation period* I would take of John Knox, and his consorts and adversaries (Lethington, Kirkcaldy, Regents Murray, Morton, and Mar, Buchanan, Bothwell, even Rizzio, and the like), any picture I could get; all attainable pictures, engravings, &c., or almost all, unless they be more numerous than I suppose,—might promise to

be 'helps,' in that great scarcity, and great *desire* to be helped. While, again, in reference to *The Forty-five*, where pictures abound, and where the personages and their affair are so infinitely insignificant in comparison, I should expect that one portrait, and that only of the very topmost men, would well suffice. Yet there is a real interest, too, in that poor Forty-five,—for, in fine, we lie very *near* it still, and that is always a great point; and I should somehow like to have a Hawley, a Sir John Cope, Wade, and Duke of Cumberland smuggled in, by way of 'illustrative Notes,' if that were possible. Nay, I really think it should be done; and, on the whole, perceive that *The Forty-five* will be one of your more opulent fields.

The question "Who is a Historical Character?" is, in many cases, already settled, and, in most cases, will be capable of easy settlement. In general, whoever *lives* in the memory of Scotchmen, whoever is yet practically recognizable as a conspicuous worker, speaker, singer, or sufferer in the past time of Scotland, he is a 'Historical Character,' and we shall be glad to see the veritable likeness of him. For examples, given at random:—George Buchanan, David Rizzio, Lord Hailes, Lord Kames, Monboddo, Bozzy, Burns, Gawin Douglas, Barbour, Jamie Thomson. I would take in, and eagerly, David Dale (of the cotton manufacture), less eagerly Dundas (of the suffrage ditto), and, in general, ask myself, Who said, did, or suffered anything truly memorable, or even anything still much remembered? From Bruce down to Heathfield and Abercromby, the common History-books will direct you plentifully as to one class; and for the others, knowledge and good judgment will be the methods.

4°. Lastly, as to the Catalogue. I am accustomed to conceive the Catalogue, if well done, as one of the best parts of the whole. Brevity, sound knowledge, exactitude, fidelity, ought to be the characteristic of every feature of it. Say you allow, on the average, not more than half a page to each, in by far the majority of cases; hardly more than a page to any: historical, lucid, above all things exact. I would give the *essence* of the man's history, *condensed* to the very utmost; the dates, his birth, death, main transactions,—in short, the *bones* of his

history; then add reference to books and sources (carefully distinguishing the good from the less good), where his history and character can be learned farther by such as wish to study it. Afterwards, in a line or two, indicate the actual *habitat* of the picture here exhibited; *its* history, if it have one; that it is *known* to be by such and such a master (and on what authority), or that it is only guessed. What value and excellence might lie in such a Catalogue, if rightly done, I need not say to David Laing; nor what labour, knowledge and resources would be needed to do it well! Perhaps divided among several (men with some head to *preside* over all), according to the several *periods* and classes of subject;—I can perceive *work* enough for *you*, among others, there! But, on the whole, it could be done; and it would be well worth doing, and a permanently useful thing. I would have it printed in some *bound* form, not as a pamphlet, but still very cheap; I should expect a wide immediate sale for it at railway stations and elsewhere while the Exhibition went on, and a steady and permanent sale for it afterwards for a long time indeed. A modern *Nicolson*, done according to the *real want* of the present day; and far beyond what any 'Historical Library,' with its dusty pedantries, ever was before!

But enough now. Your patience must not be quite ridden to death, and the very paper admonishes me to have done. Accept in good part what hasty stuff I have written; forgive it at least. I must say, this small National Project has again grown to look quite beautiful to me;—*possible* surely in some form, and full of uses. Probably the real "*Crystal Palace*" that would beseem poor old Scotland in these days of Exhibitions,—a country rather eminently rich in men perhaps, which is the pearl and soul of all other "riches."—Believe me yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.[1]

[1] Some efforts, I believe, were made in the direction indicated, by Gentlemen of the Antiquarian Society and others; but as yet without any actual "Exhibition" coming to light. Later, and for Britain at large, we have had, by the Goxernment itself, some kind of "Commission" or "Board" appointed, for forming a permanent "National Portrait-Gallery,"—with what success, is still to be seen.—(*Note of* 1857.)

THE PRINZENRAUB:

A GLIMPSE OF SAXON HISTORY.

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THE PRINZENRAUB:

A GLIMPSE OF SAXON HISTORY.

ENGLISH ignorance of foreign history. German history, especially, quite wild soil, very rough to the ploughshare. (p. 137).—The Wettin Line of Saxon Princes (Prince Albert's line); and its lucky inheritance and force of survival: Through the earlier portion of the fifteenth century, one of the greatest houses in Germany. Coalescings, splittings, never-ending readjustments. Frederick the Pacific and his brother Wilhelm 'rule conjointly;' till they quarrel and take to fighting. Kunz von Kaufungen, a German *condottiere*, employed by Frederick. The fighting over, Kunz is dissatisfied with his bargain: Exasperations, and threats of revenge. Frederick's two children left at home unguarded: Here is the opportunity we have hungrily waited-for! A midnight surprise in the venerable little town of Altenburg: The two Princes (but with a mistake to mend) carried-off: Sudden alarms, shrieks, a mother's passionate prayer: Away, rapidly, through the woods. All Saxony, to the remotest village, from all its belfries ringing madly. (138).—Kunz, with Albert the younger Prince, within an hour of the Bohemian border. A grimy Collier, much astonished to find such company in the solitudes: The Prince rescued, and Kunz safe-warded under lock-and-key. The rest of his band supposing their leader dead, restore Prince Ernst, and are permitted to fly. Kunz and others soon after tried, and all their transactions ended. The Collier also, not allowed to go unrewarded. This little actual adventure worthy of a nook in modern memory, for many reasons. (143).—Inextricable confusion and unintelligibility of Saxon princely names; each person having from ten to twenty, to hide among. Our two little stolen Princes the heads of two main streams or Lines, which still continue conspicuously distinct. The elder, or Ernestine Line, got for inheritance the better side of the Saxon country: They had Weimar, Altenburg, Gotha, Coburg,—above all, Wartburg; of all places the sun now looks upon, the *holiest* for a modern man: Immortal remembrances, influences and monitions. Ernst's son, Frederick the Wise; who saved Luther from the Diet of Worms: A man less known to hereditary governing persons, and others, than he might be. His brother, John the Steadfast, succeeded him; with whose son the Line underwent sad destinies (148).—Of the younger, or Albertine Line, there was 'Duke George;' much reverenced by many, though Luther thought so little of him: A much-afflicted, hard struggling, and not very useful man. One of his daugh-

ters a lineal ancestress of Frederick the Great. Elector Moritz, and his seemingly-successful jockeyship: The game not yet played-out. However that may be, the Ernestine Line has clearly got disintegrated: Johann Friedrich the Magnanimous, then head of that elder line, all now in a reduced condition: Why did he found all that imbroglio of little dukes! The thrifty Brandenburg Hohenzollerns, and their fine talent of 'annihilating rubbish.' Moritz, the new Elector, did not last long: No cage big enough to hold a Kaiser: Beats Albert Alcibiades; and gets killed. The present King of Saxony a far-off *nephew* of jockeying Moritz: A most expensive progeny; in general not admirable otherwise. August the Strong, of the three-hundred-and-fifty-four bastards: More transcendent king of gluttonous flunkeys seldom stalked this earth. His miscellany of mistresses, very pretty some of them, but fools all: The unspeakably unexemplary mortal! Protestant Saxony spiritually bankrupt ever since. One of his bastards became Maréchal de Saxe, and made much noise for a time: Like his father, an immensely strong man; of unbounded dissoluteness, and loose native ingenuity. (152).—The elder or Ernestine Line in its undecipherable, disintegrated state. How the pious German mind holds by the palpably superfluous; and in general cannot annihilate rubbish: The Ernestine Line was but like its neighbours in that. Cruel to say of these Ernestine little Dukes, they have no history: Perhaps here and there they have more history than we are aware of. Pity brave men, descended presumably from Witekind and the gods, certainly from John the Steadfast and John Frederick the Magnanimous, should be reduced to stand thus inert, amid the whirling arena of the world! (163).—Bernhard of Weimar, a famed captain in the Thirty-Years War,—whose Life Goethe prudently did *not* write: Not so easy to dig-out a Hero from the mouldering paper-heaps. Another individual of the Ernestine Line; notable to Englishmen as 'Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg.' He also a late, very late, grandson of that little stolen Ernst; concerning whom both English History and English Prophecy might say something. The Horologe of Time goes inexorably on. (165).

THE PRINZENRAUB:

A GLIMPSE OF SAXON HISTORY.[1]

[1855.]

Over seas in Saxony, in the month of July 1455, a notable thing befell; and this in regard to two persons who have themselves, by accident, become notable. Concerning which we are now to say something, with the reader's permission. Unluckily, few English readers ever heard of the event; and it is probable there is but one English reader or writer (the present reviewer, for his sins) that was ever driven or led to inquire into it: so that it is quite wild soil, very rough for the ploughshare; neither can the harvest well be considerable. "English readers are so deeply ignorant of foreign history, especially of German history!" exclaims a learned professor. Alas, yes; English readers are dreadfully ignorant of many things, indeed of most things;—which is a lamentable circumstance, and ought to be amended by degrees.

But, however all this may be, here is somewhat in relation

[1] Westminster Review, No. 123, January 1855.—1. *Schreiter's Geschichte des Prinzenraubs* (Schreiter's History of the Stealing of the Princes). Leipzig, 1804.

2. *Johann Hübner's, Rectoris der Schule zu S. Johannis in Hamburg, Genealogische Tabellen* (Genealogical Tables, by Johann Hübner, Rector of St. John's School in Hamburg). 3 vols. oblong 4to. Leipzig, 1725–1728.

3. *Genealogische Tafeln zur Staatengeschichte der Germanischen und Slawischen Völker im 19ten Jahrhundert* (Genealogical Tables for the State History of the Germanic and Slavic Nations in the 19th Century). By Dr. Friedrich Maximilian Œrtel. 1 vol. oblong 12mo. Leipzig, 1846.

to that Saxon business, called the *Prinzenraub*, or Stealing of the Princes, and to the other "pearls of memory" (do not call them old buttons of memory!)which string themselves upon the threads of that. Beating about in those dismal haunted wildernesses; painfully sorting and sifting in the historical lumber-rooms and their dusty fusty imbroglios, in quest of far other objects,—this is what we have picked-up on that accidental matter. To which the reader, if he can make any use of it, has our welcome and our blessing.

The *Wettin* Line of Saxon Princes, the same that yet endures, known by sight to every English creature (for the high individual, Prince Albert, is of it), had been lucky enough to combine in itself, by inheritance, by good management, chiefly by inheritance, and mere force of survival, all the Three separate portions and divided dignities of that country: The Thüringen Landgraviate, the Meissen Markgraviate, and the ancient Duchy and Electorate of Saxony; and to become very great among the Princes of the German empire. It was in 1423 that Elector Frederick, named *der Streitbare* (the Fencible, or Prompt-to-fight), one of the notables of this line, had got from Emperor Sigismund, for help rendered (of which poor Sigismund had always need, in all kinds), the vacant *Kur* (Electorship) and Dukedom of Saxony; after which accession, and through the earlier portion of the fifteenth century, this Saxon House might fairly reckon itself the greatest in Germany, till Austria, till Brandenburg gradually rose to overshadow it. Law of primogeniture could never be accepted in that country; nothing but divisions, redivisions, coalescings, splittings, and never-ending readjustments and collisions were prevalent in consequence; to which cause, first of all, the loss of the race by Saxony may be ascribed.

To enter into all that, be far from us. Enough to say that this *Streitbare*, Frederick the *Fencible*, left several sons, and none of them without some snack of principality taken from the main lot: several sons, who, however, by death and bad behaviour, pretty soon reduced themselves to two: 1st, the eldest, a Frederick, named the Placid, Peaceable, or Pacific

(Friedrich *der Sanftmüthige*), who possessed the electorate and indivisible, inalienable land thereto pertaining (Wittenberg, Torgau, &c. ; a certain 'circle' or province in the Wittenberg region ; of which, as Prussia has now got all or most of it, the exact boundaries are not known to me) ; and 2d, a Wilhelm, who in all the other territories 'ruled conjointly' with Frederick.

Conjointly : were not such lands likely to be beautifully 'ruled'? Like a carriage-team with *two* drivers on the box! Frederick, however, was Pacific ; probably an excellent good-natured man ; for I do not find that he wanted fire either, and conclude that the friendly elements abounded in him. Frederick was a man that could be lived with ; and the conjoint government went on, without visible outbreak, between his brother Wilhelm and him, for a series of years. For twelve years, better or worse ;—much better than our own red and white *Roses* here at home, which were fast budding into battles of St. Albans, battles of Towton, and other sad outcomes about that time! Of which twelve years we accordingly say nothing.

But now in the twelfth year, a foolish second-cousin, a Friedrich the Silly (*Einfältige*), at Weimar, died childless, A.D. 1440 ; by which event extensive Thuringian possessions fell into the main lot again ; whereupon the question arose, How to divide them? A question difficult to solve ; which by-and-by declared itself to be insoluble ; and gave rise to open war between the brothers Frederic Pacific and Wilhelm of Meissen. Frederick proving stronger, Wilhelm called-in the Bohemians, —confused Hussite, Ziska-Podiebrad populations, bitter enemies of orthodox Germany ; against whom Frederick sent celebrated fighting-captains, Kunz von Kaufungen and others; who did no good on the Bohemians, but showed all men how dangerous a conflagration had arisen here in the heart of the country, and how needful to be quenched without delay. Accordingly the neighbours all ran up, Kaiser Frederick III. at the head of them (a cunning old Kaiser, Max's father) ; and quenched it was, after four or five years' ruinous confusion, by the 'treaty of Naumburg' in 1450,—most obscure treaty,

not necessary to be laid before the reader ;—whereby, if not joint government, peaceable division and separation could ensue.

The conflagration was thus put out ; but various coals of it continued hot for a long time,—Kunz von Kaufungen, above-mentioned, the hottest of all. Kunz or Conrad, born squire or ritter of a certain territory and old tower called Kaufungen, the *site* of which old tower, if now no ruins of it, can be seen near Penig on the Mulde river, some two hours' ride south-east of Altenburg in those Thuringian or Upper Saxon regions,—Kunz had made himself a name in the world, though unluckily he was short of property otherwise at present. For one thing, Kunz had gained great renown by beating Albert of Brandenburg, the Albert named *Achilles*, third Hohenzollern Elector of Brandenburg, and the fiercest fighter of his day (a terrible hawked-nosed, square-jawed, lean, ancient man, ancestor of Frederick the Great) ; Kunz, I say, had beaten this potentate, being hired by the town of Nürnberg, Albert's rebellious town, to do it ; or if not beaten him (for Albert prevailed in the end), had at least taken him captive in some fight, and made him pay a huge ransom. He had also been in the Hussite wars, this Kunz, fighting up and down : a German *condottiere*, I find, or Dugald Dalgetty of the epoch ; his last stroke of work had been this late engagement, under Frederick the Peaceable, to fight against brother Wilhelm and his Bohemian allies.

In this last enterprise Kunz had prospered but indifferently. He had indeed gained something they called the 'victory of Gera,'—loud honour, I doubt not, and temporary possession of that little town of Gera ;—but in return, had seen his own old tower of Kaufungen, and all his properties, wasted by ravages of war. Nay, he had at length been taken captive by the Bohemians, and been obliged to ransom himself by huge outlay of money :—4,000 *goldgulden*, or about 2,000*l.* sterling ; a crushing sum ! With all which losses, why did not Kunz lose his life too, as he might easily have done? It would have been better for him. Not having lost his life, he did of course, at the end of the war, claim and expect indemnity : but he could get none, or not any that was satisfactory to him.

Elector Frederick had had losses of his own ; was disposed to stick to the letter of his contracts in reference to Kunz : not even the 4,000 *goldgulden* of Bohemian ransom would he consent to repay. Elector Frederick alleged that Kunz was not his liegeman, whom he was bound to protect ; but only his soldier, hired to fight at so much per day, and stand the risks himself. In fine, he exasperated Kunz very much ; and could be brought to nothing, except to agree that arbitrators should be named, to settle what was really due from one to the other ; —a course of little promise to indigent, indignant Kunz. The arbitrators did accordingly meet, and Kunz being summoned, made his appearance ; but not liking the figure of the court, went away again without waiting for the verdict ; which, accordingly, did fall-out infinitely short of his wishes or expectations, and made the indigent man still more indignant. Violent speeches were heard from him in consequence, and were officiously reported ; nay, some say, were heard by the Elector himself : for example, That a man might have vengeance, if he could get nothing else ; that an indigent, indignant fighting-man, driven utterly desperate, would harry and destroy ; would do this and also that, of a direful and dreadful nature. To which the Elector answered : "Don't burn the fishponds, at any rate ; the poor fishes in their ponds ! "—still farther angering Kunz. Kunz was then heard growling about "vengeance not on this unjust Elector's land and people, but on his flesh and blood ;" in short, growing ever more intemperate, grim of humour, and violent of speech, Kunz was at last banished the country ; ordered flatly to go about his business, and growl elsewhere. He went, with certain indigent followers of his, across into Bohemia ; where, after groping about, he purchased an old castle, Isenburg the name of it ; castle hanging somewhere on the western slopes of the *Erzgebirge* (Metal Mountains so-called), convenient for the Saxon frontier, and to be had cheap : this empty damp old castle of Isenburg Kunz bought ; and lived there, in such humour as may be conceived. Revenge on this unjust Elector, and "not on his land and people, but on his flesh and blood," was now the one thought of Kunz.

Two Misnian squires, Mosen and Schönberg, former subalterns of his, I suppose, and equally disaffected as himself, were with him at Isenburg; besides these, whose connexions and followers could assist with head or hand, there was in correspondence with him one Schwalbe, a Bohemian by birth, officiating now as cook (cook or scullion, I am uncertain which) in the electoral Castle itself at Altenburg; this Schwalbe, in the way of intelligence and help for plotting, was of course the most important of all. Intelligence enough from Schwalbe and his consorts; and schemes grounded thereon; first one scheme and then another, in that hungry castle of Isenburg, we need not doubt. At length word came from Schwalbe, That on the 7th of July (1455), the Elector was to take a journey to Leipzig; Electress and two Princes (there were but two, still boys) to be left behind at Altenburg: whether anything could follow out of that? Most of the servants, Schwalbe added, were invited to a supper in the town, and would be absent drinking. Absent drinking; Princes left unguarded? Much can follow out of that! Wait for an opportunity till Doomsday, will there ever come a better? Let this, in brief, be the basis of our grand scheme; and let all hands be busy upon it. Isenburg expects every man to do his duty!—Nor was Isenburg disappointed.

The venerable little Saxon town of Altenburg lies, among intricate woods and Metal-Mountain wildernesses, a good day's riding west from Isenburg: nevertheless, at the fit date, Isenburg has done its duty; and in spite of the intricacies and the hot weather, Kunz is on the ground in full readiness. Towards midnight, namely, on the 7th of July 1455, Kunz, with a party of thirty men, his two Misnian squires among them, well-mounted and armed, silently approaches the rendezvous under the Castle of Altenburg; softly announces himself, by whew of whistling, or some concerted signal, audible in the stillness of the ambrosial night. Cook Schwalbe is awake; Cook Schwalbe answers signal; flings him down a line, fixes his rope-ladders: Kunz, with his Misnian squires and a select few more, mounts

aloft; leaving the rest below, to be vigilant, to seize the doors especially, when once we are masters of them from within.

Kunz, who had once been head chamberlain here, knows every room and passage of this royal Castle; probably his Misnians also know it, or a good deal of it, from of old. They first lock all the servants' doors; lock the Electress's door; walk then into the room where the two Princes sleep, in charge of their ancient governess, a feeble old lady, who can give no hindrance;—they seize the two Princes, boys of twelve and fourteen; descend with them, by the great staircase, into the court of the Castle, successfully so far;—or rather, not quite successfully, but with a mistake to mend. They find, when in the court of the Castle, that here indeed is Prince Ernst, the eldest boy, but that instead of Prince Albert we have brought his bedfellow, a young Count Barby, of no use to us. This was Mosen the Misnian's mistake; stupid Mosen! Kunz himself runs aloft again; finds now the real Albert, who had hid himself below the bed; descends with the real Albert. "To horse now, to horse, my men, without delay!" These noises had awakened the Electress; to what terrors and emotions we can fancy. Finding her door bolted, but learning gradually what is toward, she speaks or shrieks, from the window, a passionate prayer, in the name of earth and heaven, Not to take her children from her. "Whatsoever your demands are, I will see them granted, only leave my children!"—"Sorry we cannot, high Lady!" thought Kunz, and rode rapidly away; for all the Castle is now getting awake, and locks will not long keep every one imprisoned in his room.

Kunz, forth again into the ambrosial night, divides his party into two, one Prince with each; Kunz himself leading the one, Mosen to lead the other. They are to ride by two different roads towards Bohemia, that if one misluck, there may still be another to make terms. Kunz himself, with the little Albert he has got on hand (no time to *change* princes at present), takes the more northerly road; and both dive into the woods. Not a moment to be lost; for already the alarm-

bell is out at Altenburg,—some servant having burst his door, and got clutch of it; the results of which will be manifold! Result *first* could not fail: The half-drunk servants, who are out at supper, come tumbling home; listen open-mouthed, then go tumbling back into the little town, and awaken *its* alarm-bell; which awakens, in the usual progression, all others whatsoever; so that Saxony at large, to the remotest village, from all its belfries, big and little, is ringing madly; and all day Kunz, at every thin place of the forest, hears a ding-dong of doom pronounced against him, and plunges deviously forward all the more intently.

A hot day, and a dreadful ride through boggy wastes and intricate mountain woods; with the alarm-bell, and shadow of the gallows, dogging one all the way. Here, however, we are now, within an hour of the Bohemian border;—cheerily, my men, through these wild woods and hills! The young Prince, a boy of twelve, declares himself dying of thirst Kunz, not without pity, not without anxiety on that head, bids his men ride on; all but himself and two squires shall ride on, get everything ready at Isenburg, whither we and his young Highness will soon follow. Kunz encourages the Prince; dismounts, he and his squires, to gather him some bilberries. Kunz is busy in that search,—when a black figure staggers-in upon the scene; a grimy *Köhler*, namely (Collier, Charcoal-burner), with a long poking-pole (what he calls *schürbaum*) in his hand: grimy Collier, just awakened from his after-dinner nap; somewhat astonished to find company in these solitudes. "How, what! Who is the young gentleman? What are my Herren pleased to be doing here?" inquired the Collier. "Pooh, a youth who has run away from his relations; who has fallen thirsty: do you know where bilberries are?—No?—Then why not walk on your way, my grim one?" The grim one has heard ringing of alarm-bells all day; is not quite in haste to go: Kunz, whirling round to make him go, is caught in the bushes by the spurs, falls flat on his face; the young Prince whispers eagerly, "I am Prince Albert, and am stolen!"—Whew-wew! —One of the squires aims a blow at the Prince, so it is said;

perhaps it was at the Collier only: the Collier wards with his poking-pole,s trikes fiercely with his poking-pole, fells down the squire, belabours Kunz himself. During which the Collier's dog lustily barks; and, behold, the Collier's Wife comes running on the scene, and with her shrieks brings a body of other colliers upon it; Kunz is evidently done! He surrenders, with his squires and Prince; is led, by this black bodyguard, armed with axes, shovels, poking-poles, to the neighbouring monastery of Grünhain (Green Grove), and is there safe warded under lock-and-key. The afternoon of July 8th, 1455; what a day for him and for others!—I remark, with certainty, that dusty riders, in rather unusual numbers, and of miscellaneous equipment, are also entering London City, far away, this very evening; a constitutional parliament having to take seat at Westminster, tomorrow, 9th July 1455, of all days and years,[1] to settle what the battle of St. Albans, lately fought, will come to. For the rest, that the King of England has fallen imbecile, and his she-wolf of France is on flight; that probably York will be Protector again (till he lose his head),—and that the troubles of mankind are not limited to Saxony and its Metal Mountains, but that the Devil everywhere is busy, as usual!—This consideration will serve at least to date the affair of Kunz for us, and shall therefore stand unerased.

From Grünhain Monastery the Electress, gladdest of Saxon mothers, gets back her younger boy to Altenburg, with hope of the other: praised be heaven forever for it. "And you, O Collier of a thousand! what is your wish, what is your want?—How dared you beard such a lion as that Kunz, you with your simple poking-pole, you Collier sent of heaven!"—"Madam, I *drilled* him soundly with my poking-pole (*hab ihn weidlich getrillt*);" at which they all laughed, and called the Collier *der Triller*, the *Driller*.

Meanwhile, Mosen the Misnian is also faring ill; with the alarm-bells all awake about him, and the country risen in hot chase. Six of his men have been caught; the rest are diving ever deeper into the thickets. In the end, they seek shelter

[1] Henry's History of Britain, vi. 108.

in a cavern, stay there perdue for three days, not far from the castle of Steina, still within the Saxon border. Three days, —while the debate of Westminster is prosperously proceeding, and imbecile Henry the Sixth takes his ease at Windsor, —these poor fellows lie quaking, hungry, in their cave; and dare not debate, except in whispers; very uncertain what the issue will be. The third day they hear from colliers or wandering woodmen, accidentally talking together in their neighbourhood, that Kunz is taken, tried, and most probably beheaded. Well-a-day! Well-a-day! Hereupon they open a correspondence with the nearest Amtmann, him of Zwickau: to the effect, That if free pardon is granted, they will at once restore Prince Ernst; if not, they will at once kill him. The Amtmann of Zwickau is thrown into excitement, it may be well supposed: but what can the Amtmann or any official person do? Accede to their terms, since, as desperate men, they have the power of enforcing them. It is thought, had they even demanded Kunz's pardon, it must have been granted; but they fancied Kunz already ended, and did not insist on this. Enough, on the 11th of the month, fourth day since the flight, third day in this hunger-cave of Steina, Prince Ernst was given up; and Mosen, Schönfels and Co., refreshed with food, fled swiftly unharmed, and 'were never heard of more,' say my authorities.

Prince Ernst was received by his glad father at Chemnitz; soon carried to his glad mother and brother at Altenburg: upon which the whole court, with trembling joy, made a pilgrimage to Ebersdorf, a monastery and shrine in those parts. They gave pious thanks there, one and all; the mother giving suitable dotation furthermore; and, what is notable, hanging-up among her other votive gifts two coats (she, says rumour and prints; but I guess it was the lucrative showmen after *her*): the coat of Kunz, leather buff I suppose, and the coat of The Driller, Triller, as we call that heaven-sent Collier, coat grimy black, and made of what stuff I know not. Which coats were still shown in the present generation; nay, perhaps are still to be seen at this day, if a judicious tourist made inquiry for them.

On the 14th, and not till then, Kunz of Kaufungen, tried and doomed before, laid his head on the block at Freyberg: some say, pardon *had* been got for him from the joyful Serene Highnesses, but came an hour too late. This seems uncertain, seems improbable: at least poor Dietrich of Kaufungen, his younger brother, was done to death at Altenburg itself some time after, for 'inconsiderate words' uttered by him,—feelings not sufficiently under one's control. That Schwalbe, the Bohemian Cook, was torn with 'red-hot pincers,' and otherwise mercilessly mangled and strangled, need not be stated. He and one or two others, supposed to be concerned in his peculiar treason, were treated so; and with this the gallows-part of the tranaction ended.

As to the Driller himself, when asked what his wish was it turned out to be modest in the extreme: Only liberty to cut, of scrags and waste wood, what would suffice for his charring purposes, in those wild forests. This was granted to the man and his posterity; made sure to him and them by legal deed: and to this was added, So many yearly bushels of corn from the electoral stockbarns, and a handsome little farm of land, to grow cole and *sauerkraut*, and support what cows and sheep, for domestic milk and wool, were necessary to the good man and his successors. 'Which properties,' I am vaguely told, but would go to see it with my eyes, were I touring in those parts, 'they enjoy to this day.' Perhaps it was a bit of learned jocularity on the part of the old conveyancers, perhaps in their high chancery at Altenburg they did not know the man's real name, or perhaps he had no very fixed one; at any rate, they called him merely *Triller* (Driller), in these important documents: which courtly nickname he or his sons adopted as a surname that would do very well; surname borne by them accordingly ever since, and concerning which there have been treatises written.[1]

[1] Groshupf's *Oratio de gentis Trillerianæ ortu* (cited in Michaelis, *Geschichte der Chur- und Fürstlichen Häuser in Teutschland*, i. 469) is one. —See, for the rest, Schurzfleisch, *Dissertatio de Conrado Kaufungo* (Wittenberg, 1720); Tenzel (Gotha, 1700); Rechenberg, *De Raptu Ernesti et Alberti;* Sagittarius, Fabricius, &c. &c.

This is the tale of Kunz of Kaufungen; this is that adventure of the *Prinzenraub* (Stealing of the Princes), much wondered at, and talked of, by all princes and all courtiers in its own day, and never quite forgotten since; being indeed apt for remembrance, and worthy of it, more or less. For it actually occurred in God's Creation, and was a fact, four-hundred years ago; and also is, and will forever continue one,—ever-enduring part and parcel of the Sum of Things, whether remembered or not. In virtue of which peculiarity it is much distinguished from innumerable other tales of adventures which did *not* occur in God's Creation, but only in the waste chambers (to be let unfurnished) of certain human heads, and which are part and parcel only of the Sum of Nothings; which nevertheless obtain some temporary remembrance, and lodge extensively, at this epoch of the world, in similar still more unfurnished chambers. In comparison, I thought this business worth a few words to the ingenuous English reader, who may still have rooms to let, in that sense. Not only so; but it seemed to deserve a little nook in modern memory, for other peculiar reasons,—which shall now be stated with extreme brevity.

The two boys, Ernst and Albert, who, at the time of their being stolen, were fourteen and twelve years old respectively, and had Frederick the *Peaceable*, the *Placid* or *Pacific*, for father, came safe to manhood. They got, by lucky survivorship, all these inextricable Saxon Territories combined into Two round lots;—did not, unfortunately, keep them so; but split them again into new divisions,—for new despair of the historical student, among others!—and have at this day extensive posterity, of thrice-complex relationship, of unintelligible names, still extant in the high places of the world. Unintelligible names, we may well say; each person having probably from ten to twenty names: not John or Tom; but Joachim *John* Ferdinand Ernst Albrecht; Theodor *Tom* Carl Friedrich Kunz;—as if we should say, Bill Walter Kit all as one name; every one of which is good, could you but omit the others! Posterity of unintelligible names, thrice-complex relationship;

—and in fine, of titles, qualities and territories that will remain forever unknown to man. Most singular princely nomenclature, which has often filled me with amazement. Designations *worse* than those of the Naples Lazzaroni; who indeed "have no names," but are, I conclude, distinguished by Numbers, No. 1, No. 2, and can be *known* when mentioned in human speech! Names, designations, which are too much for the human mind;—which are intricate, long-winded; abstruse as the Sibyl's oracles; and flying about, too, like her leaves with every new accident, every new puff of wind. Ever-fluctuating, ever-splitting, coalescing, re-splitting, re-combining, insignificant little territories, names, relationships and titles; inextricably indecipherable, and not worth deciphering; which only the eye of the Old Serpent could or would decipher! —Let us leave them there; and remark that they are all divided, after our little stolen Ernst and Albert, into Two main streams or Lines, the Ernst or *Ernestine Line*, and the Albert or *Albertine Line;* in which two grand divisons they flow on, each of them many-branched, through the wilderness of Time ever since. Many-branched each of the two, but conspicuously separate each from the other, they flow on; and give us the comfort of their company, in great numbers, at this very day. We will note a few of the main phenomena in these two Saxon Lines,—higher trees that have caught our eye, in that sad wilderness of princely shrubbery unsurveyable otherwise.

ERNESTINE LINE.

Ernst, the elder of those two stolen boys, became *Kurfürst* (Elector); and got for inheritance, besides the 'inalienable properties' which lie round Wittenberg, as we have said, the better or Thuringian side of the Saxon country—that is, the Weimar, Gotha, Altenburg, &c. Principalities:—while the other youth, Albert, had to take the '*Osterland* (Easternland), with part of Meissen,' what we may in general imagine to be (for no German Dryasdust will do you the kindness to say precisely) the eastern region of what is Saxony in our day. These Albertines, with an inferior territory, had, as

their main towns, Leipzig and Dresden, a *Residenz-Schloss* (or sublime enough Ducal Palace) in each city, Leipzig as yet the grander and more common one. There, at Leipzig chiefly, I say, lived the august younger or Albertine Line; especially there lived Prince Albert himself, a wealthy and potent man, though younger. But it is with Ernst that we are at present concerned.

As for Ernst, the elder, he and his lived chiefly at Wittenberg, as I perceive; there or in the neighbourhood, was their high Schloss; distinguished among palaces. But they had Weimar, they had Altenburg, Gotha, Coburg,—above all, they had the *Wartburg*, one of the most distinguished Strong Houses any Duke could live in, if he were of frugal and heroic turn. Wartburg, built by fabulous Ludwig the Springer, which grandly overhangs the town of Eisenach, grandly the general Thuringian forest; it is now,—Magician Klingsohr having sung there, St. Elizabeth having lived there and done conscious miracles, Martin Luther having lived there and done unconscious ditto,—the most interesting *Residenz*, or old grim shell of a mountain Castle turned into a tavern, now to be found in Germany, or perhaps readily in the world. One feels,—standing in Luther's room, with Luther's poor old oaken table, oaken inkholder still there, and his mark on the wall which the Devil has not yet forgotten,—as if here once more, with mere Heaven and the silent Thuringian Hills looking on, a grand and grandest battle of "One man *versus* the Devil and all men" was fought, and the latest prophecy of the Eternal was made to these sad ages that yet run; as if here, in fact, of all places that the sun now looks upon, were the *holiest* for a modern man. To me, at least, in my poor thoughts, there seemed something of *authentically* divine in this locality; as if immortal remembrances, and sacred influences and monitions were hovering over it; speaking sad, and grand, and valiant things to the hearts of men. A distinguished person, whom I had the honour of attending on that occasion, actually stooped down, when he thought my eye was off him; *kissed* the old oaken table, though one of the grimmest men now living; and

looked like lightning and rain all the morning after, with a visible moisture in those sun-eyes of his, and not a word to be drawn from him. Sure enough, Ernst and his line are not at a loss for Residences, whatever else he and they may want.

Ernst's son was *Frederick the Wise*, successor in the *Kur* (Electorship) and paternal lands; which, as Frederick did not marry and there was only one other brother, were not farther divided on this occasion. Frederick the Wise, born in 1463, was that ever-memorable *Kurfürst* who saved Luther from the Diet of Worms in 1521. A pious Catholic, with due horror of heresy up to that time, he listened with all his faculties to the poor Monk's earnest speech of four hours; knew not entirely what to think of it; thought at least, "We will hear this man farther, we will not burn this man just yet!"—and snatched him up accordingly, and stuck him safe into the Wartburg for a year. Honour to such a Kurfürst:—and what a luck to him and us that he was there to do so ever-memorable a thing, just in the nick of time! A Kurfürst really memorable and honourable, by that and by many other acts of wisdom, piety and prudent magnanimity; in which qualities History testifies that he shone. He could have had the Kaisership, on Max's death, some years before, but preferred to have young Charles V., Max's grandson, elected to it. Whereby it came that the grand Reformation Cause, at once the grandest blessing and the grandest difficulty, fell to the guidance, not of noble German veracity and pious wisdom, but of long-headed obstinate Flemish cunning; and Elector Frederick indeed had an easier life, but Germany has ever since had a much harder one! Two portraits of this wise Frederick, one by Albert Dürer, and another of inferior quality by Lucas Kranach, which represent to us an excellent, rather corpulent, elderly gentleman, looking-out from under his electoral cap, with a fine placid, honest and yet vigilant and sagacious aspect, are well known to print-collectors: but his history, the practical physiognomy of his life and procedure in this world, is less known to hereditary governing persons, and others, than it ought to be,—if there were any

chance of their taking pattern by him! He was twenty years Luther's senior; they never met personally, much as they corresponded together, during the next four years, both living oftenest in the same town. He died in 1525, and was succeeded by his brother John the Steadfast (*Johann der Beständige*).

This brother, Johann *der Beständige*, was four years younger; he also was a wise and eminently Protestant man. He struggled very faithfully for the good Cause, during his term of sovereignty; died in 1532 (fourteen years before Luther), having held the Electorate only seven years. Excellent man, though dreadfully *fat;* so that they had to screw him up by machinery when he wished to mount on horseback, in his old days.—His son was Johann Friedrich, the Magnanimous by epithet (*der Grossmüthige*), under whom the Line underwent sad destinies; *lost* the Electorship, lost much; and split itself after him, into innumerable branches, who are all of a small type ever since; and whom we shall leave for a little, till we have brought forward the Albertine Line.

ALBERTINE LINE.

Albert the Courageous (*der Beherzte*) was the name this little stolen boy attained among mankind, when he grew to maturity and came to his properties in Meissen and the Osterland. What he did to merit such high title might, at this date, in this place, be difficult to say. I find he was useful in the Netherlands, assisting Kaiser Max (or rather young Prince Max, Kaiser indeed, and Charles V.'s grandfather, in time coming) when the said young Max wedded the beautiful young Mary of Burgundy, the great heiress in those parts. Max got the Netherlands by this fine match, and came into properties enough; and soon into endless troubles and sorrows thereby; in all which, and in others that superadded themselves, Albert the Courageous was helpful according to ability; distinguishing himself indeed throughout by loyalty to his Kaiser; and in general, I think, being rather of a conservative turn. The rest of his merit in History,—we conclude, it was work that

had mainly a Saxon, or at most a German fame, and did not reach the ear of the general world. However, sure enough it all lies safely *funded* in Saxon and German Life to this hour, Saxony reaping the full benefit of it (if any); and it shall not concern us here. Only on three figures of the posterity begotten by him shall we pause a little, then leave him to his fate. Elector Moritz, Duke George, August the Strong: on these three we will glance for one moment; the rest, in mute endless procession, shall rustle past unseen by us.

Albert's eldest son, then, and successor in the eastern properties and residences, was Duke George of Saxony,—called 'of Saxony,' as all those Dukes, big and little, were and still are,—*Herzog Georg von Sachsen:* of whom, to make him memorable, it is enough to say that he was Luther's Duke George! Yes, this is he with whom Luther had such wrangling and jangling. Here, for the first time, English country-gentlemen may discern "Duke George" as a fact, though a dark one, in this world; see dimly who begat him, where he lived, how he actually *was* (presumably) a human creature, and not a mere rumour of a name. "Fear of Duke George?" said Luther: "No, not that. I have seen the King of Chaos in my time, Sathanas himself, and thrown my inkbottle at him. Duke George! Had I had business in Leipzig, I should have gone thither, if it had rained Duke Georges for nine days running!" Well, reader, this is he: George the Rich, called also the *Barbatus* (Beardy), likewise the Learned: a very magnificent Herr; learned, bearded, gilded, to a notable degree; and much reverenced by many, though Luther thought so little of him.

He was strong for the old religion, while his cousins went so valiantly ahead for the new. He attended at Diets, argued, negotiated; offered to risk life and fortune, in some diplomatic degree, but was happily never called to do it. His Brother, and most of his people, gradually became Protestants, which much grieved him. Pack, unfortunate Herr Pack, whose 'revelations' gave rise to the Schmalkaldic League, and to the first Protestant War, had been his secretary. Pack ran off from him; made said 'revelations,' That

there was a private bargain, between Duke George and others, headed by the Kaiser, to cut-off and forfeit Philip of Hesse, the chief Protestant, that &c. &c. : whereby, in the first place, poor Pack lost his head ; and, in the second place, poor Duke George's troubles were increased fourfold and tenfold.

Poor soul, he had lost most of his ten children, some of them in infancy, others in maturity and middle age, by death ; was now himself getting old, within a year or two of seventy ; and his troubles not in the least diminishing. At length he lost his wife ; the good old dame, a princess of Bohemia, who had been his stay in all sorrows, she too was called away from him. Protestantism spreading, the Devil broken loose, all was against Duke George ; and he felt that his own time must now be nigh. His very Brother, now heir-apparent by the death of all the young men, was of declared Protestant tendencies. George wrote to his Brother, who, for the present, was very poor, offering to give him up the government and territories at once, on condition that the Catholic Religion should be maintained intact : Brother respectfully refused. Duke George then made a will, to the like effect ; summoned his Estates to sanction it ; Estates would not sanction : Duke George was seized with dreadful bowel-disorders, and lay down to die. Sorrow on it ! Alas, alas !

There is one memorability of his sad last moments : a reverend Pater was endeavouring to strengthen him by assurances about his own good works, about the favour of the Saints and such like, when Dr. Rothe, the Crypto-Protestant medical gentleman, ventured to suggest in the extreme moment, "*Gnädiger Herr*, you were often wont to say, Straightforward is the best runner ! Do that yourself ; go straight to the blessed Saviour and eternal Son of God, who bore our sins ; and leave the dead Saints alone ! "—"Ey, then—help me, then," George groaned out in low sad murmur, "true Saviour, Jesus Christ ; take pity on me, and save me by thy bitter sorrows and death ! " and yielded-up his soul in this manner. A much-afflicted, hard-struggling, and not very useful man. He was so learned, he had written his Father Albert's exploits in Latin ; of which respectable 'Monograph,'

Fabricius, in his Chronicle, has made use. Fabricius: not that big Hamburg Fabricius of the *Bibliothecas;* but an earlier minor one, *Georg Goldschmied* his vernacular name, who was 'crowned poet by Kaiser Max,' became head-schoolmaster in Meissen, and wrote meritorious chronicles, indifferently exact, *Rerum Misnicarum*, and such like,—*he* is the Fabricius to whom the respectable Monograph fell. Of this poor Duke's palaces and riches, at Leipzig and elsewhere, I say nothing, except that they were very grand. He wore a magnificent beard, too, dagger-shaped and very long; was of heroic stature and carriage; truly a respectable-looking man. I will remember nothing more of him, except that he was withal an ancestor of Frederick the Great: no doubt of that small interesting fact. One of his daughters was married to Philip the Magnanimous of Hesse,—wife insufficient for magnanimous Philip, therefore he was obliged to marry a second, or supplement to her, which is a known story! But another of Duke George's daughters, who alone concerns us here, was spouse to Joachim II., sixth *Kurfürst* of Brandenburg, who bore him Johann George, seventh ditto, in lawful wedlock; and so was Frederick the Unique's great-grandfather's great-grandmother, that is to say, lineal ancestress in the seventh generation. If it rained Duke Georges nine days running, I would say no more about them.

We come now to *Elector Moritz*, our second figure. George's brother, Henry, succeeded; lived only for two years; in which time all went to Protestantism in the eastern parts of Saxony, as in the western. This Henry's eldest son, and first successor, was *Moritz*, the "Maurice" known in English Protestant books, who, in the Schmalkaldic League and War, played such a questionable game with his Protestant cousin, of the elder or Ernestine Line,—quite ousting said cousin, by superior jockeyship, and reducing his Line and him to the second rank ever since. This cousin was Johann Friedrich the Magnanimous, of the Ernestine Line; whom we left above waiting for that catastrophe: and it came about in this manner.

Duke Moritz refused, namely, to join his poor cousin and other fellow Protestants in the Schmalkaldic League or War,

in spite of Secretary Pack's denunciations, and the evidence of facts. Duke Moritz waited till the Kaiser (Charles V., year 1547, and their own ill-guidance, had beaten to pieces and ruined said League and War; till the Kaiser had captured Johann Frederick the Magnanimous in person, and was about to kill him. And then, at this point of the game, by dextrous management, Duke Moritz got the Electorship transferred to himself; Electorship, with Wittenberg and the 'inalienable lands and dignities;'—his poor cousin sitting prisoner the while, in imminent danger of his life; not getting loose for five years, but following the Kaiser like condemned luggage, up and down, in a very perilous and uncomfortable manner! This from Moritz, who was himself a Protestant, only better skilled in jockeyship, was not thought handsome conduct,—nor could it be.

However, he made it good; succeeded in it,—what is called succeeding. Neither is the game yet played out, nor Moritz publicly declared (what he fully surely *is*, and can by discerning eyes be seen to be) the *loser*. Moritz kept his Electorship, and, by cunning jockeying, his Protestantism too; got his Albertine or junior Line pushed into the place of the Ernestine or first; in which dishonourably-acquired position it continues to this day; performing ever since the chief part in Saxony, as Electors, and now as Kings of Saxony;—which seems to make him out rather as winner in the game? For the Ernestine, or honourable Protestant Line is ever since in a secondary, diminished, and as it were, *disintegrated state*, a Line *broken small;* nothing now but a series of small Dukes, Weimar, Gotha, Coburg, and the like, in the Thuringian region, on mere genealogical grounds, put Sachsen to their name: Sachsen-Coburg, Sachsen-Weimar, &c.;—and do not look like winners. Nor perhaps are they,—if they also have played too ill! Perhaps neither of the two is winner; for there are many other hands in the game withal: sure I am only that Moritz has *lost*, and never *could* win! As perhaps may appear yet, by and by.

But, however that may be, the Ernestine Line has clearly got *disintegrated*, broken small, and is not in a culminating condition. These, I say, are the Dukes who in the present

day put Sachsen to their name : sons of Ernst, sons of Johann Friedrich the Magnanimous, all now in a reduced condition : while the sons of Albert, nephews of George the Dagger-bearded ('if it rain Duke Georges'), are Kings of Saxony, so-called Kings. No matter : nay, who knows whether it is not perhaps even *less* than nothing to them, this grand dignity of theirs? Whether, in very truth, if we look at substance and not semblance, the Albertine Line has *risen* since Moritz's time ; or in spite of all these crowns and appearances, sublime to the valet judgment, has fallen and is still falling? I do not find, in fact, that it has ever *done* anything considerable since ; which is the one sure symptom of rising. My probable conjecture rather is, that it has done (if Nature's Register, if the Eternal Daybook, were consulted) very little indeed, except dwindle into more and more contemptibility, and impotence to *do* anything considerable whatever! Which is a very melancholy issue of Moritz's great efforts ; and might give rise to unspeakable considerations, in many a high man and many a low,—for which there is not room in this place.

Johann Frederick, it is well known, sat magnanimously playing chess, while the Kaiser's sentence of death was brought in to him : he listened to the reading of the sentence ; said a polite word or two ; then turning round, with "*Pergamus*, Let us proceed!" quietly played on till the checkmate had been settled.[1] Johann Frederick magnanimously waited-out his five years of captivity, excellent old Lucas Kranach, his painter and humble friend, refusing to quit him, but steadfastly sharing the same ; then quietly returned (old Lucas still with him) to his true loving-hearted wife, to the glad friends whose faith had been tried in the fire. With such a wife waiting him, and such a Lucas attending him, a man had still something left, had his lands been all gone ; which in Johann Frederick's case, they were still far from being. He settled at Weimar, having lost electoral Wittenberg and the inalienable properties ; he continued to do here as formerly, whatever wise and noble thing he could, through the short remain-

[1] De Wette : *Lebens-Geschichte der Herzoge zu Sachsen* (Weimar, 1770) 1. 39.

der of his life:—one wishes he had not founded all that imbroglio of little dukes! But perhaps he could not help it: law of primogeniture, except among the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns, always a wise, decisive, thrifty and growing race, who *had* the fine talent of 'annihilating rubbish,' was not yet known in those countries. Johann Frederick felt, most likely, that he, for one, in this aspect of the stars, was not founding kingdoms! but indeed it was not he, it was his successors, his grandson and great-grandson chiefly, that made these multiplex divisions and confusions on the face of the German mother-earth, and perplexed the human soul with this inextricable wilderness of little dukes. From him, however, they do all descend; this let the reader know, and let it be some slight satisfaction to him to have got a historical double-girth tied round them in that manner, and see Two compact Bundles made of them, in the mean while.

Moritz, the new Elector, did not last long. Shortly after Johann Frederick got home to Weimar, Moritz had already found his death, in prosecution of that game begun by him. It is well known he had no sooner made the Electorate sure to himself than he too drew sword against the Kaiser; beat the Kaiser; chased him into the Tyrol mountains; could have taken him there, but—"I have no cage big enough to hold such a bird," said Moritz: so he let the Kaiser run; and made the Treaty of Passau with him instead. Treaty of Passau (A. D. 1552), by which Johann Frederick's liberty was brought about, for one thing, and many liberties were stipulated for the Protestants; upon which Treaty indeed Germany rested from its religious battles, of the blood-shedding sort, and fought only by ink thenceforth,—till the Thirty-Years' War came, and a new Treaty, that of Munster or Westphalia (1648), had to succeed.

Shortly after Passau, Moritz, now on the Kaiser's side, and clear for peace and submission to said treaty, drew-out against his oldest comrade, Albert Hohenzollern of Anspach, —'Albert *Alcibiades*' as they call him, that far-shining, too-impetuous Failure of a Frederick the Great;—drew-out, I say, against this Alcibiades, who would not accept the Treaty

of Passau; beat Alcibiades in the battle of Sievershausen, but lost his own life withal in it,—no more, either of fighting or diplomatising, needed from him;—and thus, after only some six years of Electorship, slept with his fathers, no Elector, but a clod of the valley.

His younger brother succeeded; from whom, in a direct line, come all the subsequent Saxon potentates; and the present King of Saxony, with whom one has no acquaintance, nor much want of any. All of them are *nephews*, so to speak, of Elector Moritz, grand-nephews of Duke George the Dagger-bearded ('if it rained Duke Georges'). Duke George is, as it were, the grand-uncle of them all; as Albert, our little stolen boy for whom Kunz von Kaufungen once gathered bilberries, is father of him and of them all. A goodly progeny, in point of numbers; and handsomely equipt and decorated by a liberal world: most expensive people,—in general not admirable otherwise. Of which multifarious progeny I will remember farther only one, or at most two; having no esteem for them myself, nor wish to encumber anybody's innocent memory with what perhaps deserves oblivion better, and at all events is rapidly on the way to get it, with or without my sanction. Here, however, is our third figure, *August the Strong.*

Frederick August, the big King of Poland, called by some of his contemporaries August the Great, which epithet they had to change for *August der Starke*, August the Physically Strong: this August of the three-hundred-and-fifty-four bastards, who was able to break a horse-shoe with his hands, and who lived in this world regardless of expense,—he is the individual of this junior-senior Albertine Line, whom I wish to pause one moment upon: merely with the remark, that if Moritz had any hand in making him the phenomenon he was, Moritz may well be ashamed of his work. More transcendent king of gluttonous flunkeys seldom trod this lower earth. A miracle to his own century,—to certain of the flunkey species a quasi-celestial miracle, bright with diamonds, with endless mistresses, regardless of expense,—to other men a prodigy, portent and quasi-infernal miracle, awakening in-

soluble inquiries: Whence this, ye righteous gods, and above all, whither! Poor devil, he was full of good humour too, and had the best of stomachs. A man that had his own troubles withal. His miscellany of mistresses, very pretty some of them, but fools all, would have driven most men mad. You may discern dimly in the flunkey histories, in babbling *Pöllnitz* and others, what a set they were; what a time he must have had with their jealousies, their sick vapours, megrims, angers and infatuations;—springing, on occasion, out of bed in their shift, like wild-cats, at the throat of him, fixing their mad claws in him, when he merely enters to ask, "How do you do, *mon chou?*"[1] Some of them, it is confidently said, were his own children. The unspeakably unexemplary mortal!

He got his skin well beaten,—cow-hided, as we may say—by Charles XII., the rough Swede, clad mostly in leather. He was coaxed and driven-about by Peter the Great, as Irish post-horses are,—long miles, with a bundle of hay, never to be attained, stuck upon the pole of the coach. He reduced himself to utter bankruptcy. He had got the crown of Poland by pretending to adopt Papistry,—the apostate, and even pseudo-apostate; and we may say he has made Protestant Saxony, and his own House first of all, spiritually bankrupt ever since. He died at last, at Warsaw (year 1733), of an 'old man's foot;' highly composed, eupeptic to the last: busy in scheming-out a partition of Poland,—a thing more than once in men's heads, but not to be completed just yet. Adieu to him forever and a day.

One of his bastards was Rutowsky, long conspicuous in poor Saxony as their chief military man; whom the Prussians beat at Kesselsdorf,—who was often beaten; whom Frederick the Great at last shut-up in Pirna. Another was the *Chevalier de Saxe*, also a kind of general, good for very little. But by far the notablest was he of Aurora von Königsmark's producing, whom they called *Comte de Saxe* in his own country, and who afterwards in France became *Maréchal de Saxe;* a man who made much noise in the world for a time. Of him

[1] Pöllnitz: *La Saxe Galante; Mémoires et Lettres, &c.*

also let us say an anecdotic word. Baron d'Espagnac and the biographers had long been uncertain about the date of his birth,—date and place alike dubious. For whose sake, here at length, after a century of searching, is the extract from the baptismal register, found by an inquiring man. Poor Aurora, it appears, had been sent to the Harz Mountains, in the still autumn, in her interesting situation; lodges in the ancient highland town of Goslar, anonymously, very privately; and this is what the books of the old *Marktkirche* (Market-Church) in that remote little place still bear:

'*Den acht-und-zwenzigsten October*'—But we must translate: 'The twenty-eighth of October, in the year Sixteenhundred and ninety-six, in the evening, between seven and eight o'clock, there was born, by the high Lady (*von der vornehmen Frau*) who lodges in R. Heinrich Christoph Winkel's house, a Son; which Son, on the 30th *ejusdem*, was in the evening baptised, in M. S. Alb's house, and, by the name *Mauritius*, incorporated to the Lord Jesus (*dem Herrn Jesu einverleibt*). Godfathers were Herr Dr. Trumph, R. N. Dusings and R. Heinrich Christoph Winkel.'[1] Which ought to settle that small matter, at least.

On the authority of Baron d'Espagnac, I mention one other thing of this *Mauritius*, or Moritz, Maréchal de Saxe; who, like his father, was an immensely strong man. Walking once in the streets of London, he came into collision with a scavenger, had words with the scavenger, who perhaps had splashed him with his mud-shovel, or the like. Scavenger would make no apology; willing to try a round of boxing instead. Moritz grasps him suddenly by the back of the breeches; whirls him aloft, in horizontal position; pitches him into his own mudcart, and walks on.[2] A man of much physical strength, till his wild ways wasted it all.

He was tall of stature, had black circular eyebrows, black bright eyes,—brightness partly intellectual, partly animal, —oftenest with a smile in them. Undoubtedly a man of un-

[1] Cramer: *Aurora von Königsmark* (Leipzig, 1836), i. 126.

[2] Espagnac: *Vie du Maréchal de Saxe* (ii. 274, of the German Translation).

bounded dissoluteness ; of much energy, loose native ingenuity ; and the worst *speller* probably ever known. Take this one specimen, the shortest I have, not otherwise the best ; specimen achieved, when there had a proposal risen in the obsequious Académie Française to elect this Maréchal a member. The Maréchal had the sense to decline. *Ils veule me fere de la Cadémie*, writes he ; *sela miret com une bage a un chas;* meaning probably, *Ils veulent me faire de l'Académie; cela m'iroit comme une bague à un chat :* 'They would have me in the Academy ; it would suit me as a ring would a cat,'—or say, a pair of breeches a cock. Probably he had much skill in war ; I cannot judge : his victories were very pretty; but it is to be remembered, he gained them all over the Duke of Cumberland; who was beaten by everybody that tried, and never beat anything, except once some starved Highland peasants at Culloden.

To resume and conclude. August the Physically Strong, be it known in brief then, is great-grandson of an Elector called Johann Georg I., who behaved very ill in the Thirty-Years' War ; now joining with the great Gustavus, now deserting him ; and seeking merely, in a poor tortuous way, little to the honour of German Protestantism in that epoch, to save his own goods and skin ; wherein, too, he did not even succeed : August the Physically Strong, and Pseudo-Papist apostate, is great-grandson of that poor man ; who again is grand-nephew of the worldly-wise Elector Moritz, Passau-Treaty Moritz, questionable Protestant, questionable friend and enemy of Charles V., with 'No cage fit to hold so big a bird,'—and is therefore also great-grand-nephew of Luther's friend, 'If it rained Duke Georges.' To his generation there are six from Duke George's, five from Elector Moritz's : that is the genealogy. And if I add, that the son of August the Physically Strong was he who got to be August III., King of Poland ; spent his time in smoking tobacco ; and had Brühl for minister,—Brühl of the three-hundred and sixty-five suits of clothes, who brought Frederick of Prussia and the Seven-Years' War into his country, and thereby, so to speak, quite broke the back of Saxony,—I think we may close our excerpts

from the Albertine Line. Of the elder or Ernestine Line, in its *disintegrated* state, I will hastily subjoin yet a word, with the reader's leave, and then end.

ERNESTINE LINE (*in the disintegrated state, or broken small*).

Noble Johann Frederick, who lost the Electorate, and retired to Weimar, nobler for his losses, is not to be particularly blamed for splitting his territory into pieces, and founding that imbroglio of little dukedoms, which run about, ever shifting, like a mass of quicksilver cut into little separate pools and drops; distractive to the human mind, in a geographical and in far deeper senses. The case was not peculiar to Johann Frederick of the Ernestine Line; but was common to all German dukes and lines. The pious German mind grudges to lop anything away; holds by the palpably superfluous; and in general 'cannot annihilate rubbish;'—that is its inborn fault. Law of primogeniture, for such small sovereignties and dukedoms, is hardly yet, as the general rule, above a century old in that country; which, for sovereigns and for citizens, much more than for geographers, was certainly a strange state of matters!

The Albertine Line, Electoral though it now was, made apanages, subdivisions, unintelligible little dukes and dukeries of a similar kind, though perhaps a little more charily: almost within a century we can remember little sovereign dukes of that line. A Duke of Weissenfels, for instance; foolish old gawk, whom Wilhelmina Princess Royal recollects for his distracted notions,[1]—which were well shaken-out of him by Wilhelmina's Brother afterwards. Or again, contemporaneously, that other little Duke,—what was the title of him?—who had built the biggest bassoon ever heard of; thirty feet high, or so; and was seen playing on it from a trap-ladder;[2]—poor soul, denied an employment in this world, and obliged to fly to bassoons!

Then, too, a Duke of Merseburg,[3] who was dining solemnly,

[1] *Mémoires de Wilhelmine de Prusse, Margrave de Bareith.*

[2] Pöllnitz: *Mémoires et Lettres.*

[3] Same as the Bassoon Duke.—ED.

when the "Old Dessauer" (Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, conqueror at Kesselsdorf afterwards, and a great rough Prussian son of Mars) broke-in upon him, in a friendly manner, half-drunk, with half-drunk grenadiers whom he had been reviewing; and reviewed and paraded them again *there* within the sublime ducal dining-room itself, and fired volleys there (to the ruin of mirrors and cut-glass); and danced with the princesses, his officers and he,—a princess in your left-hand, a drawn sword in your right;—and drank and uproared, in a Titanic manner, for about eight hours; making a sorcerer's sabbath of the poor duke's solemn dinner.[1] Sachsen-Weissenfels, Sachsen-Merseburg, Sachsen-Zeitz:—there were many little dukes of the Albertine Line, too, but happily they are now all dead childless; and their apanages have fallen home to the general mass, which does not henceforth make subdivisions of itself. The Ernestine Line was but like the Albertine, and like all its neighbours, in that respect.

So, too, it would be cruel to say of these Ernestine little Dukes that they have no history; though it must be owned, in the modern state of the world, they are ever more, and have long been, almost in the impossibility of having any. To build big bassoons, and play on them from trap-ladders; to do hunting, build opera-houses, give court-shows: what else, if they do not care to serve in foreign armies, is well possible for them? It is a fatal position; and they really ought to be delivered from it. Perhaps then they might do better. Nay, perhaps already here and there they have more history than we are all aware of. The late Duke of Weimar was beneficent to men-of-letters; had the altogether essential merit, too, which is a very singular one, of finding out, for that object, the real men-of-letters instead of the counterfeit. A Duke of Sachsen-Gotha, of earlier date, went into the *Grumbach'sche Handel* (sad 'Grumbach Brabble,' consisting of wild-justice in high quarters, by assassination or sudden homicide in the street, with consequences; of all which the English reader happily knows nothing),—went into it bravely, if rashly,

[1] *Des weltberühmten Fürstens Leopoldi von Anhalt-Dessau Leben*, &c. (Leipzig, 1742), pp. 108–112.

in generous pity for Grumbach, in high hope for himself withal; and got thrown into jail for life, poor Duke! Where also his Wife attended him, like a brave true woman, 'for twenty years.'—On the whole, I rather think they would still gladly have histories if they could; and am willing to regret that brave men and princes, descended presumably from Witekind and the gods, certainly from John the Steadfast and John Frederick the Magnanimous, should be reduced to stand inert in the whirling arena of the world in that manner, swathed in old wrappages and packthread meshes, into inability to move; watching sadly the Centuries with their stormful opulences rush past you, Century after Century in vain!

But it is better we should close. Of the Ernestine Line, in its disintegrated state, let us mention only two names, in the briefest manner, who are not quite without significance to men and Englishmen; and therewith really end. The first is Bernhard of Weimar; champion of Elizabeth Stuart, Ex-queen of Bohemia; famed captain in the Thirty-Years' War; a really notable man. Whose *Life* Goethe once thought of writing; but prudently (right prudently, as I can now see) drew out of it, and wrote nothing. Not so easy to dig-out a Hero from the mountainous owl-droppings, deadening to the human nostril, which moulder in Record Offices and Public Libraries; patrolled-over by mere irrational monsters, of the gryphon and vulture and chimæra species! Easier, a good deal, to versify the Ideal a little, and stick-by ballads and the legitimate drama. Bernhard was Johann Frederick the Magnanimous's great-grandson: that is his genealogy; great-grandson of little stolen Ernst's grandson. He began in those Bohemian Campaigns (1621), a young lad of seventeen; *Rittmeister* to one of his elder Brothers; some three of whom, in various capacities, fought in the Protestant wars of their time. Very ardent Protestants, they and he; men of devout mind withal; as generally their whole Line, from Johann Frederick the Magnanimous downwards, were distinguished by being. He had risen to be a famed captain, while still young; and, under and after the great Gustavus, he did exploits to make the whole world know him. He 'was in two-and-thirty battles;' gained or

helped to gain, almost all of them ; but unfortunately *lost* that of Nördlingen, which, next to Lützen, was the most important of all. He had taken Breisach (in the Upper-Rhine country), thought to be inexpugnable ; and was just in sight of immense ulterior achievements and advancements, when he died suddenly (1639), still only in his thirty-fifth year. The Richelieu French poisoned him (so ran and runs the rumour) ; at least he died conveniently for Richelieu, for Germany most inconveniently ; and was in truth a mighty kind of man ; distinguished much from the imbroglio of little Dukes : 'grandson's great-grandson,' as I said, 'of'——— Or, alas, is it hopeless to charge a modern reader's memory even with Bernhard !

Another individual of the Ernestine Line, surely notable to Englishmen, and much to be distinguished amid that imbroglio of little Dukes, is the '*Prinz* Albrecht *Franz August Karl Emanul von Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha ;*' whom we call, in briefer English, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg ; actual Prince Consort of these happy realms. He also is a late, very late, grandson of that little stolen Ernst. Concerning whom both English History and English Prophecy might say something,— but not conveniently in this place. By the generality of thinking Englishmen he is regarded as a man of solid sense and worth, seemingly of superior talent, placed in circumstances beyond measure singular. Very complicated circumstances ; and which do not promise to grow less so, but the contrary. For the Horologe of Time goes inexorably on ; and the Sick Ages ripen (with terrible rapidity at present) towards—— Who will tell us what ? The human wisdom of this Prince, whatever share of it he has, may one day be unspeakably important to mankind !—But enough, enough. We will here subjoin his Pedigree at least ; which is a very innocent Document, riddled from the big Historical cinderheaps, and may be comfortable to some persons :

'Ernst the Pious, Duke of Sachsen-Gotha (1601–1675), was one of Bernhard of Weimar's elder brothers ; great-grandson of Johann Frederick the Magnanimous, who lost the Electorate. Had been a soldier in his youth ; succeeded to Gotha and the main part of the Territories ; and much distinguished him-

self there. A patron of learning, among other good things; set Seckendorf on compiling the *History of the Reformation.* To all appearance, an excellent, prudent and really *pious* Governor of men. He left seven sons; who at first lived together at Gotha, and 'governed conjointly;' but at length divided the Territories; Frederick the eldest taking Gotha, where various other Fredericks succeeded him, and the line did not die out till 1824. The other six brothers likewise all founded 'Lines,' Coburg, Meinungen, Römhild, Eisenberg, Hildburghausen, Saalfeld, most of which soon died out; but it is only the youngest brother, he of *Saalfeld* with his Line, that concerns us here.

1° JOHANN ERNST (1658–1729), youngest son of Ernst the Pious; got *Saalfeld* for his portion. The *then* Coburg Line died out in 1678, upon which arose great arguings as to who should inherit; arguings, bargainings; and, between Meinungen and Saalfeld especially, a lawsuit in the *Reichshofrath* (Imperial Aulic Council, as we call it), which seemed as if it would never end. At length, in 1735, Saalfeld, 'after two-hundred and six *Conclusa* (Decrees) in its favour,' carried the point over Meinungen; got possession of 'Coburg Town, and nearly all the Territory,' and holds it ever since. Johann Ernst was dead in the interim; but had left his son,

2° FRANZ JOSIAS (born 1697) Duke of *Sachsen-Saalfeld,*—who, as we see, in 1735, after these '206 Decrees,' got Coburg too, and adopted that town as his *Residenz;* Duke of Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld thenceforth. A younger brother of this Franz Josias was the "Coburg" (Austrian General) thrice-famous in the French Newspapers of 1792–'94, if now forgotten. His (Franz Josias's) son and successor was,

3° ERNST FRIEDRICH (1724–1800);—and his

4° FRANZ FRIEDRICH ANTON (1750–1806). He left three daughters, one of whom became Duchess of Kent, and mother of Queen Victoria: likewise three sons; the youngest of whom is Leopold, now King of the Belgians; and the eldest of whom was

5° ERNST ANTON KARL LUDWIG (1784–1844); to whom *Sachsen-Gotha* fell in 1824;—whose elder son is now reigning Duke of *Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld-Gotha* (chief Residence Gotha); and whose younger is

6° PRINCE ALBERT, whom we know.[1]

[1] Hübner, tab. 163; Œrtel, tab. 70; Michaelis, *Chur- und Fürstlicher Häuser in Teutschland*, i. 511–525.

So that the young gentleman who will one day (it is hoped but not till after many years) be King of England, is visibly, as we count, Thirteenth in direct descent from that little boy Ernst whom Kunz von Kaufungen stole. Ernst's generation and Twelve others have blossomed-out and grown big, and have faded and been blown away; and in these 400 years, since Kunz did his feat, we have arrived so far. And that is the last 'pearl, or odd button,' I will string on that Transaction.

*** Here is a Letter since received, which may be worth printing:

'Royal Society, Somerset House, 6th August 1856.

'DEAR SIR,—I am a stranger to you, though not to your works; and would not intrude on your time and attention, were it not that the subject on which I write may perhaps procure me your indulgence.

'I have taken a walk into Bohemia, and visited, on the way, some of the places identified with the Prinzenraub. The old town of Altenburg is picturesque in situation, architecture and the costume of its Wendish population. In the castle, which stands on a hill resembling that at Edinburgh, are to be seen the dresses worn by the young Princes at the time of their kidnapping, ancient weapons, armour, &c., old chambers and modern halls, and a walled-up window marking the situation of the one through which Kunz carried-off his princely booty.

'The estate which was given to the Driller is situate about half-an-hour's walk to the east of Zwickau; a town that recalls Luther to memory. He (Luther) often ascended the tall church-tower to enjoy the prospect around; and there remains on the top an old clumsy table said to have been his.

'The Driller family is not extinct. Three male representatives are living at Freyberg and other places in Saxony; but the estate has been out of their possession for many years. It lies pleasantly on one side of a narrow glen, and is now the site of a large brewery—*Driller Bierbrauerei*—famed in all the country round for the excellence of its beer. By experience acceptably gathered on the spot on a hot afternoon, I can testify that the *Driller beer* is equal to its reputation.

Hence there is something besides a patriotic sentiment to attract customers to the shady gardens and spacious guest-chambers of the brewery; and to justify the writing over the entrance,—*Dulcius ex ipso fonte bibuntur aquæ.*

'In one of the rooms I saw a full-length painting of the Driller; a sturdy, resolute-looking fellow, with ample black beard, grasping his pole, and supporting the young Prince whom he has just rescued. Also two miniatures; one inscribed *Georg Schmidt od. Triller;* the other, a likeness of his Wife, a rustic dame of quiet expression, with gray eyes and arched eyebrows. Also a portrait of Kunz, very different from what I expected. He bears a striking resemblance to our portraits of Sir Philip Sidney; with crisp curly hair, ample forehead, well-opened eye, pointed beard, and wearing a gold chain. Also a thin quarto containing a history of the *Prinzenraub,* with portraits, and engravings of the incidents: The stealing of the princes from the castle—the rescue—the joyful return—the beheading of Kunz, &c. All these things help to keep-up a little enthusiasm among the Saxons, and perhaps encourage trade.

'On the 8th of July of last year (1855), a festival was held to celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of the *Prinzenraub.* A long procession, headed by Herr Ebert, the chief proprietor (since deceased), walked from Zwickau to the brewery, passing under two triumphal-arches on the way. The leader was followed by a long file of coalers, by friends on foot and in carriages, and bands of music in wagons; altogether about eight-hundred persons. They kept-up the celebration with right good-will, and drank, so the Braumeister told me, a hundred *eimers* of beer.

'A similar festival was held on the same day at Altenburg, Hartenstein, Grünhain, attended by people from all the neighbouring villages, when not a few paid a visit to the Prinzenhöhle,—the cave in which Prince Ernst was hidden.

'I did not see the monastery of Ebersdorf; but I was informed by sundry persons that the Driller's coat is still to be seen there.

'I remain, yours with much respect,
'WALTER WHITE.

'THOMAS CARLYLE, ESQ.'

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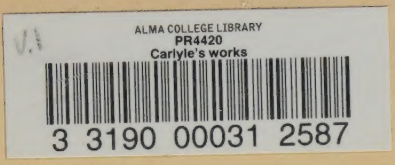

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